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A
FULL INQUIRY
INTO THE SUBJECT OF
SUICIDE.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED
(AS BEING CLOSELY CONNECTED WITH THE SUBJECT)
TWO TREATISES
ON
DUELLING AND GAMING.
IN TWO VOLUMES.

By CHARLES MOORE, M.A.

RECTOR OF CUXTON AND VICAR OF BOUGHTON-BLEAN, KENT;
AND FORMERLY FELLOW OF TRINITY-COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

“Est luctuosissimum genus mortis, quæ non ex naturâ nec fatalis videtur.”

PLIN. Epist. L. I. xii.

—What thou livest

Live well; how long or short, permit to Heaven.

PAR. Lost, B. XI.

V O L. II.

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T O

T H E R I G H T R E V E R E N D

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T H I S V O L U M E

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TABLE OF GENERAL CONTENTS.

V O L. II.

P A R T VI.

The History of modern Suicide continued ; containing a review of certain writings in its favour.

C H A P. I.

The work of John Donne, D.D. (who died Dean of St. Paul's in 1631) called " Biathanatos" examined. Page 1—41

N. B. For a fuller account of Contents see at the head of each Chapter.

C H A P. II.

Strictures on Hume's Essay on Suicide:—also on a passage in Gibbon's Roman History on the same subject. Page 42—72

C H A P. III.

An account of some miscellaneous writings, in which the subject of suicide is introduced, and its practice either wholly or partially approved or condemned.

Page 73—120

P A R T VII.

Containing a review of certain publications on the subject of Suicide, in which our compassion is attempted to be excited in opposition to our judgment.

C H A P. I.

Large strictures on the evil tendency of a book entitled " Sorrows of Werter : " and observations on a volume called " Love and Madness." The question answered, " May I not kill myself, to avoid the evil effects of my outrageous passions on others?" Page 121—164

C O N T E N T S.

C H A P. II.

Examples of cool and deliberate suicide in Richard Smith and his family (1732); in Von Arenswald the German (1781).—Their stories, and reflections upon them.—The question discussed—whether coolness and deliberation in suicide can be pleaded in behalf of its innocence?—The necessary secrecy of suicide a proof of its being unwarrantable. Page 165—184

P A R T VIII.

Containing a recapitulation of the former Parts; and certain precautions and preservatives proposed against a temptation to the commission of Suicide.

C H A P. I.

Brief recapitulation of what has been proved in the former Parts. Page 185—196

C H A P. II.

Some precautions or preservatives proposed against falling under a temptation to the commission of suicide. Page 197—214

E N D O F S U I C I D E.

G E N E-

GENERAL CONTENTS

OF

TREATISE ON DUELLING.

CHAP. I.

Brief account of the rise of the ancient Duel; its progress and variations.

Page 218—227

CHAP. II.

Canons and laws against Duelling, and their effects.

Page 228—250

CHAP. III.

The nature and ground of the modern Duel opened.—Causes of its reprehension.

Page 250—258

CHAP. IV.

The Duellist's defence, and answer to it.

Page 258—273

CHAP. V.

The case of those considered, who, though they abhor the principle, yet deem it necessary to comply with the practice.—Address to the Gentlemen of the Army in particular, why they should discountenance the Duel.

Page 274—282

END OF DUELLING.

GENE-

GENERAL CONTENTS
OF
TREATISE ON GAMING.

CHAP. I.

Some general observations on the nature of Play and its evil consequences; in particular as productive of so much suicide. Page 286—292

CHAP. II.

Historical proofs of Gaming being an universal passion;—equally the pursuit of barbarous and enlightened nations; and the foible or vice alike of great and little minds. Page 293—316

CHAP. III.

Brief account of the origin of Dice, Cards, and the pursuits of the Turf.—Their progress in England. Page 317—335

CHAP. IV.

The Sharper described.—Newmarket the emporium of gambling. Page 336—351

CHAP. V.

Gambling in the commercial line.—Lotteries.—Stock-jobbing.—Notoriously productive either of direct or indirect self-murder. Page 352—365

CHAP.

C O N T E N T S.

C H A P. VI.

Gambling among Females.—Truth's address to the Ladies.—Consequence of this practice among them.—Gambling among men of rank and distinction.—Its fatal consequences and production of self-murder. Page 365—380

C H A P. VII.

Evils to society attendant on gambling.—Preventives of gambling proposed.—Influence of the manners of the Great on the body of the community.—The nature of Right and Wrong unchangeable.—The province of Reason;—the assistance of Revelation. Page 381—392

E N D O F G A M I N G.

*Further Additions and Corrections in Vol. I. and II.
A general Index to the two Volumes.*

Page 393—405

A F U L L

A

F U L L I N Q U I R Y

INTO THE SUBJECT OF

S U I C I D E, &c.

P A R T VI.

THE HISTORY OF MODERN SUICIDE CONTINUED; CONTAINING A REVIEW
OF CERTAIN WRITINGS IN ITS FAVOUR.

C H A P. I.

Some account given of Donne, and his treatise called Biathanatos.—Remarks on his preface.—General divisions of his work.—Observations on his first part “of law and nature.”—Reflections on the supposed (by some) irremissibility of the sin of Suicide.—Donne’s arguments of its being no greater a sin against our nature than many others answered.—His ideas of the law of nature and of self-preservation proved incorrect, and his consequent deductions in favour of suicide in particular cases erroneous.—His extraordinary position, “that all men naturally wish to die,” confronted with a passage in St. Augustin to prove the contrary, “that men are too fond of life.”—The eagerness of martyrdom was a relic (says Donne) of the ancient propensity to suicide.—This point expounded at large in answer to

VOL. II. Donne’s

Donne's arguments.—The impropriety of the stress he lays on its being permitted by the laws of ancient nations, to prove it no unnatural offence.—Reflections on the degree of influence to be allowed to examples and customs.—Donne's second Part—"Of the law of reason" examined.—He confines reason here to conclusions drawn from the powers of ratiocination.—Hence he gives a preference to the resolutions of senates and councils beyond those of individuals: to imperial or civil law above all others; which he maintains did not consider suicide "as a crime,"—and therefore it is not against reason.—These positions controverted, and the cause assigned, why the Roman law did not punish suicide as a crime in itself.—Donne's observations on canon law respecting suicide.—His shrewd remark on the severity of canon law answered.—Suicide (he observes) was never condemned as heretical.—Reason assigned why it never was.—Donne's method of arguing on the councils of discipline, which punished suicide, refuted.—Donne's opinions concerning the severity of the laws of particular states against suicide examined, and his artful mode of reasoning on this head laid open.—Donne proceeds to discuss the opinions of Fathers, &c.—His unfair treatment of Augustin.—His interpretation of Jerom's and other fathers' opinions stretched beyond bounds.—Donne's assertion of suicide's being no infringement on the magistrate's power over life and death answered.—Remarks on his observations on Josephus's harangue on suicide.—His objections to reasons produced against suicide on grounds of moral virtues, such as justice and charity, answered.—Arguments produced by Donne to invalidate the charge against suicide, either a toto or a tanto (as he speaks,) answered.—His opinion of the sanctification of suicide in certain cases by the authority of the church proved erroneous.—Donne's third Part, of the law of God, has been examined in another place.—Strong allusions and good sense in the opening of this Part.—Remarks on his conclusion of the whole."

THE author of the treatise now about to undergo examination was the learned John Donne, who was born of Popish parents in the year 1573; but who about the age of twenty [A] became a Protestant on the most serious conviction. He received holy orders from the church of England in the year

1614,

[A] Donne went to Oxford at ten years of age to Hart-hall; about fourteen he removed to Cambridge, that he might experience all the advantages to be derived from both Universities. He was a most laborious student in all branches of literature, and possessed of uncommon abilities; but he took

1614, and was made Dean of St. Paul's in 1621; which dignity he enjoyed till his death, which happened in 1631. He was held in the highest repute for his abilities and learning, and was styled by Lucius Lord Falkland "the most eloquent of Divines:" and Walton [B] speaks thus of the treatise in question. "He left fix score of his sermons, all written with his own hand: also an exact and laborious treatise on self-murder, called Biathanatos, wherein all the laws violated by that act are diligently surveyed and judiciously censured;—a treatise written in his younger days, which alone might declare him then not only perfect in the civil and canon law, but in many other such studies and arguments, as enter not into the consideration of many, who labour to be thought great clerks, and who pretend to know all things." The title of his book is "Biathanatos, or a declaration of that paradox or thesis, that self-homicide is not so naturally sin that it may never be otherwise. Wherein the nature and the extent of all those laws, which seem to be violated by this act, are diligently surveyed."

Donne's own judgment of the book is to be found in what follows. Among the collection [c] of his letters is one addressed "To the noblest Knight Sir Edward Herbert, Lord of Cherbury," sent to him with his book *Biathanatos*, which is as follows.

no degrees at this time in either University on account of the necessary oaths, against taking of which his parents and friends, who were Papists, advised him. At the age of seventeen he went to Lincoln's-Inn with intent to follow the profession of a lawyer; but in this line however he did not proceed. When between eighteen and twenty years of age, being unresolved in his religion any further than as a Christian in general, but thinking it necessary to join himself to some particular church, he began a serious survey of the body of divinity in all points of controversy betwixt the Reformed and the Roman churches; and "as God's blessed spirit did then awaken him to the search, and in that industry did never forsake him (these are his own words in his preface to his *Pseudo-martyr*) so he calls the same holy spirit to witness this protestation, that in that disquisition and search he proceeded with humility and diffidence in himself, and by that which he took to be the safest way, namely, frequent prayers and an indifferent affection to both parties." In consequence of this serious inquiry he became a firm Protestant.—After this he spent several years in travelling. On his return he experienced a variety of fortunes; his first wishes were for state-employments; but at length when turned of forty, at the particular solicitation of King James, he became a clergyman, and some time after had the degree of Doctor of Divinity conferred on him by the University of Cambridge.

[B] See Life of Donne by Isaac Walton, 8vo. London, 1671. P. 62.

[c] See Donne's Letters, Quarto, 1654, P. 20; &c.

“ Sir,

“ I make accompt that this book hath enough performed that which it undertook, both by argument and example. It shall therefore the less need to be itself another example of the doctrine. It shall not therefore kill itself; that is, not bury itself; for if it should do so, those reasons by which that act should be defended or excused, were also lost with it. Since it is content to live, it cannot choose a wholesomer aire then your library, where authors of all complexions are presented. If any of them grudge this book a room, and suspect it of new or dangerous doctrine, you, who know us all, can best moderate. To those reasons which I know your love to me will make in my favour and discharge, you may adde this, that though this doctrine hath not been taught nor defended by writers, yet they, most of any sort of men in the world, have practised it.

“ Your very true and earnest friend and servant and lover

“ J. D O N N E.”

A second letter is addressed “ To Sir Robert Carre (now Earl of Ankerum) with my book, *Biathanatos*, at my going into Germany” (which was in the year 1619, after he was in orders).

“ Sir,

“ I had need do somewhat towards you above my promises; how weak are my performances, when even my promises are defective? I cannot promise, no not in mine own hopes, equally to your merit towards me. But besides the Poems, of which you took a promise, I send you another book, to which there belongs this history. It was written by me many years since; and because it is upon a misinterpretable subject, I have always gone so near suppressing it, as that it is onely not burnt: no hand hath passed upon it to copy it, nor many eyes to read it: onely to some particular friends in both Universities, then when I writ it, I did communicate it: and I remember I had this answer—“ that certainly there was a false thread in it, but not easily found.” Keep it, I pray, with the same jealousy; let any that your discretion admits to the sight of it, know the date of it; and that it is a book written by Jack Donne, and not by Doctor Donne. Reserve it for me, if

“ I live ;

“ I live ; and if I die, I only forbid it the presse and the fire : publish it not,
 “ but yet burn it not ; and between these, do what you will with it. Love me
 “ still, thus farre for your own sake, that when you withdraw your love from
 “ me, you will find so many unworthineffes in me, as you grow ashamed of
 “ having had so long, and so much, such a thing as your poor servant in Christ
 “ Jesus

“ J. D O N N E .”

The design of neither burning nor publishing was observed during the author's life ; but the manuscript at Donne's decease falling into the hands of his son, he gives the following reasons for disobeying his father in a dedication.
 “ To the Lord, Phillip Harbert.”

“ My Lord ;

“ Although I have not exactly obeyed your commands, yet I hope I have
 “ exceeded them, by presenting to your Honour the treatise, which is so much
 “ the better by being none of mine own ; and may therefore peradventure de-
 “ serve to live, for facilitating the issues of death. It was writ long since by
 “ my father, and by him forbid both the press and the fire ; neither had I sub-
 “ jected it now to the public view, but that I could find no certain way to de-
 “ fend it from the one, but by committing it to the other. For since the be-
 “ ginning of this war (“ the civil war”) my study having been often searched,
 “ all my books (and almost my brains by their continual alarums) sequestered
 “ for the use of the committee, two dangers appeared more eminently to hover
 “ over this being then a manuscript—a danger of being utterly lost, and a
 “ danger of being utterly found ; and being fathered by some of those wild
 “ atheists, who, as if they came into the world by conquest, own all other
 “ men's wits, and are resolved to be learned in despite of their stars, that
 “ would fairly have inclined them to a more modest and honest course of life.
 “ Your Lordship's protection will defend this innocent from these two mon-
 “ sters, men that cannot write, and men that cannot read ; and I am very con-
 “ fident, all those who can, will think it may deserve this favour from your
 “ Lordship. For although this book appear under the notion of a paradox,
 “ yet :

“ yet I desire your Lordship to look upon this doctrine, as a firm and established truth,

Da vida osar morir.

Through life to dare to die.

“ Your Lordship’s most humble servant

“ JOHN DONNE.”

In consequence of this dilemma the manuscript was first committed to the press in 1644, and again reprinted in quarto in 1648, and in octavo in 1700. The original in the author’s hand-writing remains in the Bodleian library, and is dedicated to Edward Lord Herbert of Cherbury; but the father’s dedication (by which is meant perhaps the letter above-mentioned) appears not in the printed copy, having given place to the son’s as above [D].

A work then which came from the pen of one so respectable in character and so distinguished for learning; a clergyman and a dignitary of the church of England (though neither at the time of his writing it); and which was written with such care and accuracy and learning even in his younger days, requires attention. For though the style and mode of arguing in it is entirely scholastic according to the manner of the age, and it is therefore a performance not adapted to general perusal in these days, yet his arguments being many of them close and shrewd, may easily be (and in fact often have been) clothed in more engaging language by more modern writers; though they have never been drawn up by them with the precision and accuracy, that Donne himself uses. To combat Donne therefore is in fact to answer almost all the material arguments that have been used by modern defenders of suicide.

His preface contains the reasons that inclined him to write on this subject. “ Beza (says he), a man as eminent and illustrious in the full glory and noon

[D] The printed copy which has fallen into the hands of the writer of these strictures on Donne is the octavo edition of 1700: and in it is the following manuscript note by some former possessor of the book.

N. B. This book was first printed in 1644 and 1648 in quarto, and dedicated to Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury: the original under the author’s hand is in the Bodleian library.

“ of

“ of learning, as others were in its dawn and morning, when any the least
 “ sparkle was notorious, confesseth of himself, that only for the anguish of a
 “ scurf, which over-ran his head, he had once drowned himself from the mil-
 “ ler’s bridge in Paris, if his uncle by chance had not then come by that way.
 “ I have often such a sickly inclination. And whether it be, because I had
 “ my first breeding and conversation with men of a suppressed and afflicted re-
 “ ligion, accustomed to the despite of death and hungry of an imagined mar-
 “ tyrdom; or that the common enemy finds that door worst locked against him
 “ in me; or that there be a perplexity and flexibility in the doctrine itself; or
 “ because my conscience ever assures me, that no rebellious grudging at God’s
 “ gifts, nor other sinful concurrence accompanies these thoughts in me; or
 “ that a brave scorn, or that a faint cowardliness beget it; whensoever any
 “ affliction assails me, methinks I have the keys of my prison in my own hand,
 “ and no remedy presents itself so soon to my heart, as mine own sword. Often
 “ meditation on this hath won me to a charitable interpretation of their action,
 “ who die so; and provoked me a little to watch and exagitate their reasons,
 “ which pronounce so peremptory judgments upon them.—If therefore after
 “ a Christian protestation of an innocent purpose herein, and after a submission
 “ of all that is said, not only to every Christian church, but to every Christian
 “ man; and after an entreaty, that the reader will trust neither me nor the ad-
 “ verse party, but the “ reasons;” if holding these things in view, there by any
 “ scandal in this enterprise of mine, it is taken not given:—and thinking the
 “ best way to find the truth in this matter was to debate and vex it (for we
 “ must as well dispute “ de” veritate as “ pro” veritate) I abstained not, for
 “ fear of misinterpretation, from this undertaking. For in all intricacies it
 “ seems reasonable to me, that “ this” turns the scales, if on either side there
 “ appear charity towards the poor soul departed. This piety, I protest again,
 “ urges me in this discourse, and what infirmity soever my reasons may have,
 “ yet I have comfort in Trismegistus’s axiom, qui pius est, summè philosopha-
 “ tur. And therefore without any disguising or curious and libellous conceal-
 “ ing, I present and object it, to all of candour and indifferency, to escape that
 “ just taxation—“ novum malitiæ genus est et intemperantis, scribere quod oc-
 “ cultes:”—wishing, and, as far as I can, effecting, that to those very learned
 “ and subtle men, which have travelled in this point, some charitable and com-
 “ passionate men might be added,”

Three points appear more particularly worthy observation in the above extract. The first is, that from a perusal of the whole passage concerning Beza, to which Donne alludes, the reader will find, "that this "scurf or scald head" was a matter of no such small pain or anguish; that the patient was a mere child of only six or seven years of age; that little Beza was urged on by another person ever to think of destroying himself contrary to all his own feelings; that he blessed God for his escape, and ever after considered it, as an instance of special Providence over him, which sent his uncle by chance that way." Is there not therefore a degree of unfairness and artifice in this partial introduction of Beza's projected suicide at the very outset of Donne's work? and though he himself is so desirous, that the work of "Jack Donne" should not be mistaken for the work of "Doctor Donne," yet he would fain dazzle his reader with the advanced judgment and learning of Beza in his meridian days, to countenance the projected and even the involuntary action of the infant. The reader will find in the note [E] the whole story told by Beza himself.—The second point is, that a strong inclination or desire went along with Donne in this inquiry, by which he must be led to "wish," that he might find truth on that side of the question, to which he was most partial. But we know how much "inclination" is apt to bias the judgment, to add apparent strength to arguments on the one side, and to detract from their weight on the other; in short to draw us off from that "indifference," which every one ought to feel in his researches after truth.—The third point is, that notwithstanding all his apparent

[E] The circumstance Donne alludes to is to be found in Beza's Epistle prefixed to his Confession of Faith in his Theological Tracts, folio, Geneva, 1576; and is as follows.—Beza after having lamented his mother's death, when he was not three years old, goes on thus. "Ego interea Lutetiæ quamvis summâ curâ educarer, tamen moriebar potius quàm vivebam perpetuis languoribus ita prostratus, ut vix ante quinquennium e cunis proreperem. Et vixdum emerferam, quum ex pedissequi cujusdam, quocum puellus lusitabam, non animadversâ contagione "Porrigo" me miserum corripit: malum suapte naturâ pervicax, sed tum valde acerbum, quòd imperitia medicorum, quamvis in urbe celeberrimâ, ejusmodi tum esset, ut non nisi validissimis atque adeò crudelissimis medicamentis ad abigendum id malum uterentur. Itaque horret animus meminisse, quantos eo tempore cruciatus miserante patruo & frustra omnia experiente sustinuerim! Et placet hic quoque singulare exemplum divinæ in me benevolentiae commemorare. Quum chirurgus, qui me sanandum susceperat, soleret domum nostram ventitare, ne omninò pati posset patruus, ut absente se vel digitum mihi admooveret (adeò ille me tenerè & ardentè diligebat) non potuit vir humanissimus tantorum dolorum diutius esse spectator. Itaque cubiculario suo mandavit, ut quotidie me unà cum cognato quodam meo, quem mecum alebat, quique

rent show of readiness to acknowledge and make known his work (that he might not incur that “*novum malitiæ genus & intemperantis, scribere quod occultes*”) it appears from his letters, how fearful and cautious he was, lest it “*should*” be made public. He knew indeed (which may serve in part for his apology, though he expressly says in another part of his preface, “*that he will not abstain from his undertaking for fear of misrepresentation*”) he knew how ready men are to misinterpret a writer’s meaning, and to make him answerable perhaps for what was furthest from his thoughts. He knew, “*that he should be called by the public voice a general defender of suicide; whereas he only wished to maintain, that there were reasons, which might make it (if not sometimes a meritorious, yet) an indifferent action, or at least not more sinful than many others; and that therefore we should think more charitably of it than to deem it in all cases utterly unpardonable in the sight of God.*” It will be found however in the examination of the book itself, that his arguments tend to overthrow all the principles and laws on which the general guilt of suicide is established; and that therefore if valid, they open the way to a much more frequent commission of the crime than Donne himself thinks allowable. But whatever argument proves too much is said by logicians to prove nothing:—the plain meaning of which is, that when a clear absurdity or falsehood follows such or such a mode of arguing, that mode must be illogical and fallacious in itself, though its deception perhaps be not easily discoverable. We must endeavour therefore to pick out and unravel that “*false thread,*” which in the opinion of Donne’s own friends binds his arguments together. In doing

quique eodem malo fuerat correptus, ad chirurgum deduceret, cujus ne conspectum quidem ipse posset sustinere. Habebat patruus in eâ urbis parte, quam appellant Universitatem: chirurgus autem non procul Arce Regiâ, quam Luparam vocant; medio interjecto ponte, qui a molitoribus denominatur. Erat igitur pons illi trajiciendus nobis ad quotidianos cruciatus (isti præsertim ætati intolerabilis) properantibus, prosequente quidem famulo, sed, ut servi sæpe solent, non satis diligenter nos observante. Hic verò memini (& animus horret meminisse) meum illum cognatum, qui jam tum militare ingenium totus spirabat, sæpenumerò me cohortatum, ut in subiectum flumen insilientes tantis doloribus nos semel eximeremus. Ego ut naturâ timidior, primùm quidem exhorrescere, sed tamen postea vi dolorum cogente, & illo vehementer urgente, polliceor me subsecuturum. Jam igitur hoc unum supererat, ut nos miseros perderet Satan, quum Dominus nostri misertus effecit, ut nobis fortè rediens e curiâ patruus nil ejusmodi suspicans occurreret, & valdè procùl sequentem servum animadvertens, domum nos reduci & chirurgum deinceps ad nos potiùs accedere juberet. Ita me igitur Dominus jam tum mirabiliter velut ex ipsius Satanæ faucibus liberavit.”

which we hope to remember his own advice given in another part of his work; (p. 130.) “ If any one (says he) should think the cause of religion injured herein, and esteem me so much worth the reducing to the other opinion, as to apply an answer hereto, with the same charity which provoked me, and which, I thank God, hath accompanied me from the beginning, I beseech him to take thus much advantage from me and my instruction, that he will do it without bitterness. He shall see the way the better, and sail through it the better, if he raise no storms.”

The treatise is very accurately divided and subdivided according to the style of composition in those days, and is full of quotations from scholastic writers and the fathers of the church. It contains three principal divisions or parts. Part I. Of Law and Nature. Part II. Of the Law of Reason. Part III. Of the Law of God:—with a short conclusion of the whole. Each of these parts has many “ Distinctions” (as he calls them); and these distinctions many “ Sections.” What is most worthy observation in the first part (of Law and Nature) is as follows. In the first distinction Donne says—“ Every body has so sucked and digested and incorporated into the body of his faith and religion, that self-homicide is sin in itself, that all discourse on this point is upon the degrees of this sin, and how far it exceeds all others; not whether it be (always) sin or not? This ought naturally to be the first point in inquiry, but that, being under the iniquity and burden of this custom and prescription, he must first (though preposterously) examine, why this fact should be so resolutely condemned, and why it should be deemed of all other sins most irremissible? For if able to combat this, the road lies straiter (he says) to prove, that this act may be (sometimes) free, not only from those enormous degrees of sin, but from all sin.”

We are ready to agree with Donne, that it is not fair to conclude suicide to be a sin at all, without having first proved it to be so; nor irremissible without having proved that also. The former point has (it is presumed) been accomplished at large in the foregoing parts of this inquiry; and as to the latter, we hope to be esteemed charitable enough with our author, not to determine on its positive irremissibility in all cases; but to think that it may in some have its alleviations sufficient to palliate, though not totally to do away its guilt. (The

case of real lunacy is always supposed excepted from all guilt.) This point of the irremissibility of the sin of suicide was zealously maintained by ancient casuists in divinity, who argue thus. "All sin is unpardonable without repentance; self-murder is a sin, which excludes repentance; and therefore self-murder is unpardonable."—But there must be a "possibility" of actual repentance to prove its "necessity" in order for pardon; otherwise it is an harsh judgment, a most uncharitable limitation of the mercies of a benign and compassionate Deity. It is as if we should affirm, that God requires faith in Jesus Christ of those, who have never heard of the name of Jesus. For though it may be "safer" to think a thing of a doubtful nature to be always a sin, and a grievous one too, and even unpardonable, yet "such a rule (as Donne justly observes) should only serve for your own information and direction, for a bridle to yourself, not for the condemnation of another."

This uncharitable opinion of the utter irremissibility of the sin of suicide in every case, Donne strongly controverts in the first sections of his treatise; and as we agree with him in his conclusions (though not always in his quaint and scholastic mode of proof) it is not worth while to trouble ourselves or our readers with extracts or comments on this part of his work. But if it be asked by any one—"Is it not better to awe men from the commission of suicide by representing it under the most terrifying idea of being always and certainly unpardonable?"—it must be answered—no: because as a good action ought not to be over-rated in its degree of merit, so neither should a bad one be charged with more guilt than it deserves. The bounds of charity and truth ought to be religiously observed; an over-stepping of these is injuring the cause, and tends to weaken the conviction and deference, which might otherwise be paid to just and legitimate conclusions. The solid exaltation of virtue or depression of vice equally depends on the strictest adherence to truth.

Having thus combated the irremissibility of the sin of suicide, the substance of Donne's first distinction in this Part tends to prove—"that "all" sin being "an offence against the law of man's nature, there can be no reason, why self-homicide should be deemed a "particular and extraordinary" offence against man's nature rather than any other sin." He supposes a double law of nature in man—"the sensitive and the rational, equivalent to St. Paul's

“ law of the flesh and of the spirit. But the sensitive cannot be that nature, which the abhorers of self-homicide complain to be violated by that act ; unless they place all discipline, austerity and self-denial under the same predicament, which are all as contrary to the law of our sensitive nature as self-murder is.” Now sin is certainly only applicable to man in his “ rational” nature or capacity ; all “ irrational” animals being objects not capable of moral obligation. The sin of suicide therefore (like all other sins) must originally be deduced from, or belong to, man in his rational capacity or nature alone. But when we say, that the sin of suicide is aggravated by its being a sin against the sensitive (or sensual), as well as rational nature of man, we mean, that whereas most other sins in some shape or other “ gratify” the senses or appetites, the commission of this alone counteracts all their natural feelings and even destroys their very existence. It is true, that all abstinence and self-denial may be said to do the same in part ; but in this latter case we have “ rational” nature on our side, in the former against us. Suicide then being proved to be a sin at all (as by our rational nature we are informed it is) it must be a sin of an extraordinary cast and peculiar die, because it goes contrary to the principle of most other sins, which are content with offending against reason alone in gratification of the senses, whereas this offends against both. The abhorers of suicide, when speaking of its offence against nature or natural [F] impulses, generally appeal, not to reason or the rational nature of man, but to those instincts, which actuate even brutes and all irrational animals to self-preservation ;—to those propensities and feelings of his natural appetites and passions, which the suicide so apparently counteracts and stifles. The abhorers of self-homicide therefore do not mean to exclude (as Donne insinuates) a violation of the sensitive nature from the sin of suicide, but to superinduce it on the violation of the rational nature as an extraordinary aggravation of its guilt.

The substance of Donne’s ideas of what is to be called self-preservation, and why suicide is no necessary offence against it is collected in what follows (Part I. Dist. ii.) “ Self-homicide (he says) is called a sin against a particular law of

[F] See the effects of these natural impulses against self-murder delineated at large in Part II. C. i. “ On the special guilt of suicide.”

“ nature, self-preservation. But a distinction is to be made between a general
 “ law of nature for the good of an [G] whole species, or for the particular
 “ preservation of every individual belonging to that species. This natural law
 “ of self-preservation doth not so rigorously and urgently and unlimitedly
 “ bind, but that by the law of nature itself, some individuals may, nay must,
 “ neglect themselves at times for the good of other individuals, or for the state
 “ at large. Now this natural law of self-preservation extends to beasts more
 “ universally than to man ; because they cannot compare degrees of obligation
 “ and distinctions of duties and offices as man can. He, whose conscience
 “ well-tempered and dispassioned assures him, that the reason of self-preserva-
 “ tion ceases in him, may also presume that the law of it ceases too, and may
 “ do, what might otherwise [H] seem against that law. Self-preservation is
 “ no other than a natural affection and appetite of good, whether true or
 “ seeming. The desire of martyrdom is a self-preservation ; because thereby
 “ our best part is advanced. If I propose to myself in my homicide a greater
 “ good (though I mistake it), I perceive not wherein I transgress the general
 “ law of nature, which is an affection of good, true or seeming ; and if that
 “ which I affect by death be only a greater good, wherein is the other stricter
 “ law of nature, which is rectified reason, violated ?”

Donne seems here to use the term self-preservation in too large and ambiguous a sense. The word preservation belongs to the species, self-preservation to the individual. If he allow then self-preservation to be (as he does) a general law of nature, it is applicable to the individual rather than to the species. He likewise confuses the preservation of the species with the well-being of the

[G] This he illustrates in the following manner. “ And so certainly that place in scripture—it is
 “ not good for man to be alone—is meant there, because if he were alone, God’s purpose of multi-
 “ plying mankind, had been frustrate. Yet though this be ill for conservation of our species in general,
 “ yet it may be very fit for some particular man or men to abstain from all such conversation of mar-
 “ riage or men, and to retire into solitude. Our safest assurance that we be not misled with the am-
 “ biguity of the word “ natural law,” and the perplexed variety thereof in authors will be this ;—
 “ that all the precepts of natural law result (combine) in these—“ fly evil, seek good”—that is, do
 “ according to reason.”—N. B. This is true, as the general law of our nature ; and to reason
 therefore we may still refer, as the ultimatum on which to found the impropriety and guilt of
 suicide.

[H] See this objection in another form answered at end of Part II. C. i.

community.

community. This latter may sometimes depend on the destruction of an individual, but the preservation of the species can never depend on the destruction of the individual; still less can self-preservation be ever consistent with self-destruction. That we may hazard our lives in many instances for the benefit of others has been amply shown in different parts of this work. In all these cases it is not our own deaths that we seek primarily to compass, but some great benefit to others or to the community at large, which cannot be effected without the hazard of life. When he says, that the desire of martyrdom is a species of self-preservation, as being only an appetition through death of a greater good, he uses the word self-preservation in an unusual and unnatural sense; since it is never applied to any thing, but to a continuance "in this life" without reference to another. Our "existence" comprehends both states, and it may be our interest to "submit to," not to "seek unnecessarily," an honourable martyrdom, as an entrance into the "better" portion of our existence; but to talk of self-preservation in so doing is scarcely intelligible. When a man acts calmly and conscientiously, it is hard to say, whatever he does, that it can be imputable to himself as a crime; but this alters not the nature of the thing in itself. An erroneous judgment may secure personal [1] innocence; but personal innocence does not always stamp propriety on the action performed.

"Another reason (says Donne) which prevails much with me, and delivers it from being against the law of nature is this; that in all ages, in all places, and upon all occasions, men of all conditions have affected it and inclined to do it. Man, as though he were an angelus sepultus, labours to be discharged of his earthly sepulchre, his body. Now though this may be said of all other sins, that men are propense to them, and yet for all that frequency they are against nature, that is rectified reason, yet if this sin were against a particular law of nature, it could not be so general; since being contrary to our sensitive nature, it has not the advantage of pleasure and delight to allure us withal, which other sins have."—Donne then adds a long list of ancient suicides, the most remarkable of whom, as well as their motives and degrees of merit, have been noticed in various parts of this work.

[1] See this more enlarged on in the Chapter containing Von Arenswald's case, where the objection of calmness and coolness as a plea of rectitude in suicide is fully obviated.

Now the reason that suicide was prevalent in ancient times was not, that it was grounded on any natural antipathy to life (as Donne vainly imagines), but was to be found in the confused and uncertain notions that were entertained of the soul and futurity; added to that contempt of death on which all idea of ancient valour was founded. The predominant passion of pride also had a great share in its frequent production. Degradations and sufferings were deemed intolerable; and as the human mind had little certainty in future expectations, to counterbalance the endurance of present or probable misery, it sought its refuge and deliverance in immediate [κ] extinction.—But let us hear Augustin, who speaks the sense of the generality of mankind in what follows. “What do not [L] those men endure, whom the physicians attack with caustics and the knife? What do they expect from so many pains? Is it to escape death? No; —but to die a little later. The pains are certain, but the preservation of life by what is doing not so. The patient very often dies under those very torments, to which he exposes himself for fear of death: and choosing to suffer, “that he may not die,” instead of choosing to die, “that he may not suffer,” it happens that he meets with death in the midst of those sufferings, which he is willing to undergo to avoid it. But what do we love, by loving a life so wretched and so short? It is not the misery of it, since we desire to be happy; nor the shortness of it, since we fear to see the end. We love it therefore only “because it is life;” and this alone makes us love it, though short and miserable.”

“When men (says Donne Part I. Dist. iii.) by civility and mutual use of one another, became more thifty of themselves and sparing of their lives, the solemnity of killing themselves in numbers (as they were wont heretofore, to do) at funerals wore out and vanished; yet leisurely and by insensible diminutions. For first in show of it, the men wounded themselves, and the women scratched and defaced their cheeks, and sacrificed so by that aspersions of blood. After that they made graves for themselves by their friends’ graves, and en-

[κ] These points have been proved at large in those parts of this work, which contain the history of ancient suicide.

[L] The argument, which Augustine is aiming to establish in this Epistle to Armentarius and Paulina (Ep. cxxvii. Vol. I.) is directly opposite to Donne’s, viz. “that we love life too well,”—a point not very difficult to prove.

“tered

“tered into them alive. And after, in show of this show, they only took some
 “of the earth and wore it upon their heads: and so for the public benefit were
 “content to forfeit their custom of dying. And after Christianity (by making
 “us clearly to understand the state of the next life) had quenched those respects
 “of fame, ease, shame and such,—how quickly and naturally did man snatch
 “and embrace a new way of profusing his life—by martyrdom! This desire of
 “martyrdom swallowed up all the other inducements to suicide, which before
 “Christianity contracted them, so tickled and enflamed mankind.”

That the species of self-murder, which consisted in sacrificing so many lives at the decease of any person of consequence, gradually ceased in proportion to the increase of civilization in every country, is very true; but that the eagerness of martyrdom in the early ages of Christianity was a relic of the strong propensity of the Heathens to suicide, is very doubtful. A contempt of death indeed might influence both, but on the most discordant principles. That the martyrs should be very ready, and even eager to lay down their lives in defence of their principles, arose not only from a conviction of the truth of what they professed, but from as clear a conviction, that they should be instantly and eminently rewarded after their deaths for these worldly sufferings. The principle of Heathen suicide was the being tired of this life, and without any respect to another: the desire of Christian martyrdom regarded future prospects. Their motives were so totally dissimilar, that one can scarce be said to have been built on the other's foundation. But even granting it were so,—that the object in suicide only was changed and not the principle—nothing can be deduced from hence in its favour. For when many of the first martyrs so industriously sought out death [M] by the hands of others, or if disappointed in that, by their own, they certainly carried their zeal to an enthusiastic and unwarrantable height, which the true spirit of Christianity never authorised. Those martyrs erred in judgment, and against the principles of christian humility and patience, who thus threw away their lives without necessity. The arguing of Clement, of Tertullian, and Cyprian [N], mentioned by Donne in this Distinction in favour

[M] See Part V. C. i. for more concerning martyrdom, and opinions of the Fathers upon it, and also Part III. C. ii.

[N] These Fathers urged the necessity and praises of martyrdom with more warmth, because so many Christians had fallen off in the days of persecution.

of martyrdom (that is of dying for the truth's sake), extends not to persons throwing themselves unnecessarily in the way of troubles and persecutions, (much less of inflicting them on themselves or proceeding to suicide) but only, that they should at all times be ready to suffer death with cheerfulness and firmness, when called to the trial; "since even Heathens were ready to suffer it for less noble causes, and with less advantageous prospects of futurity." Nothing herein tends to the approbation or encouragement of a voluntary martyrdom, or of consequence to the encouragement of suicide. Had the natural affections of these Christians tended so much as Donne would insinuate to the love of martyrdom or suicide (which are terms often confused by Donne), there would have been no need of these spurs or incitements to suffer with resolution. It is true, that such honours were paid to the memory of martyrs (in order to inspirit others to suffer cheerfully, when called upon for the truth's sake) that martyrdom became in such high repute, as to be courted and coveted in all manner of shapes; and if it could not be obtained in a regular way by means of others, it was voluntarily inflicted on themselves by certain zealots, who thus became downright [o] suicides. But this discovers no natural propensity to death; no relic of ancient weariness of life, but only an enthusiastic temper of the times, not distinguishing between the rewards due to a death "imposed," and to a death "of one's own seeking."—Again; the suicide committed by these people bears no analogy in its principle to that of the Heathens; nor does it prove them (which is Donne's point in view) to have been "naturally" in love with death. On the contrary they were "tempted" towards it by the expectation of every reward attendant on fame here and blessedness hereafter. The martyr's name was precious upon earth, and he was supposed on his death to be admitted into the highest place in heaven. When it is moreover considered, that "his" was generally a state of persecution, poverty, and affliction in this life, there seems no great difficulty in collecting from these incidental circumstances, why he should oftentimes be so covetous of death, without being (as Donne supposes) addicted to the love of suicide by his nature. The word martyr originally signified only a "witness"—one ready to confess and bear witness to the truth of Christianity. But as in the early ages of the church, this confession and adherence to the truth in the days of persecution, almost inevitably in-

[o] See account of Donatists in Part V. C. i.

curred the penalty of death, the word martyr was at length confined to those, who suffered death in consequence of their steady attachment to their christian principles.

Donne says well in most part of what follows. “ The professors of Christianity were so worn out with confiscations and imprisonments, that they thought heaven had no door from this world but by fires, crosses, and bloody persecutions ; and presuming heaven to be at the next step, they would often stubbornly or stupidly wink and so make but one step. Those times were affected with a disease of this natural desire [P] of such a death. But alas we may fall and drown at the last stroke ; for to fail to heaven, it is not enough to cast away the burdenous superfluities, which we have long carried about us, but we must also take in a good freight. It is not lightness, but an even reposed steadiness that carries us thither. In other warfares men muster and reckon, how many they bring (alive) into the field ; in this of martyrdom, the confidence of victory lies in the multitudes of them that are lost. But since the true spirit of God drew many, the spirit of contention many, and other natural infirmities more, to expose themselves easily to death, it may well be thought, that from thence the authors of these latter ages, have somewhat remitted the intenseness and dignity of seeking martyrdom ; seeming tender, and loth by addition of religious incitements to cherish or further that desire of dying, to which by reason of our weakness and this world’s incumbrances, our nature is too propense and inclined.”—The truer reason was, that men began to see the fallacy of such enthusiastic proceedings, and that the voluntarily seeking out for death and courting its approach by violent methods, was utterly inconsistent with the principles of “ real and genuine Christianity.”

“ Another reason (Donne says, Part I. Dist. iv.) why he looks upon suicide to be no such breach of the law of nature, as aggravates the fact or renders it heinous is, because both express literal laws, and mute law, custom, hath authorised it, not only by suffering and connivency, but by appointing it. It

[P] True : they naturally desired such a death ; because it freed them at once from terrible persecution, and led them to exalted happiness ; but not out of any natural love of death in general, or of suicide.

“ hath

“ hath the countenance not only of many flourishing and well-policed states,
 “ but also of imaginary [Q] commonwealths which cunning authors have ideated,
 “ and in which such enormous faults would not be countenanced.”—He says
 further; “ that condemned men were permitted to be their own executioners, at
 “ Athens by poison, at Rome by blood-letting or how they pleased.”—But what
 has this to do with a voluntary suicide? It was only a particular mode of exe-
 cuting the sentence of the law whether just or unjust; it was giving a choice to
 the condemned person—not whether he would die or not, but by whose hands
 and how he would die.—As to the Athenian poison, it precisely resembled giving
 physic to a child;—“ if you will drink it quietly, take it in your own hands;—
 “ if not, it will be forced down your throat.”—And as to the Roman permis-
 sion to open their own veins, &c. it was simply this:—“ Reasons of state re-
 “ quire your death. You will be brought to trial, condemned, and executed:
 “ but as a mark of special favour, if you wish to avoid a trial and public exe-
 “ cution, you are at liberty to despatch yourself in the mean time in what way
 “ best pleases you.”—Thus spake in effect some emperor or his minion; and
 this was the countenance to which Donne alludes in these polished states in fa-
 vour of suicide’s not being an unnatural crime.

The Sexagenarii, whom he mentions as by the laws of many wise states to
 be precipitated from a bridge, were only persons excluded at a certain age from
 a power of voting, not from life by any violence of others, much less of their
 own. The idea of thrusting old men from a bridge in order to destroy them,
 took its rise from the method of voting, which obtained among the Romans.
 The century, which was called upon by the chief magistrate sitting in his tent
 in the Campus Martius, separated itself from the rest of the crowd, and retired
 into an enclosed apartment termed *septum* or *ovile*. But before the citizens
 forming this century could be admitted into this place, they were obliged to pass
 over some narrow boards called “ *pontes*” from their serving as a sort of bridges
 of entrance into the *septum*; and whilst a man was on these, his pretensions to
 vote were canvassed, and he was either permitted to proceed or thrust aside.
 Hence “ *de ponte dejici*” was a phrase equivalent to being denied the privilege of
 voting, and persons thus dealt with were styled “ *depontani*.”—It was not a

[Q] Donne instances in Plato *De Legibus* and Sir Thomas More’s *Utopia*:—the former has been
 considered already, the latter will be hereafter.

general practice (as Donne asserts) among the Cæans to put themselves to death at the age of seventy, crowned with garlands, &c. since we find an old lady of ninety taking that step, as has been mentioned above (Part IV. C. v.); but it might happen in some particular siege or famine, that the old men agreed to this patriotic measure, to save the lives of stouter citizens.—“The reason (says Donne) why the Roman civil law, which appointed no punishment neither in his estates nor memory for the suicide himself, yet punished the keeper, if his prisoner committed it, was out of a preconceived notion, that every prisoner would kill himself, if not narrowly watched.”—But in the first place, the assertion is too general, that the delinquent suicide was never punished by Roman law. The case has been fully stated in the chapter of Roman suicide. (Part IV. C. vi.) But the true reason with regard to punishing the keeper for his prisoner’s suicide was, that he was to be answerable for his escape from public justice; which escape was more effectually accomplished by suicide than by any other means.—“It is the custom of all nations now (says Donne) to manacle and disarm condemned men, out of a foresight or assurance, that else they would escape death by death.” Yes truly; yet not, as Donne evidently means, by their own deaths, but by the deaths of their keepers, whose lives would be in imminent danger but for such precautions.—It may be remarked in the conclusion of this Part, that examples, laws, and customs (on which Donne lays much stress to prove suicide not an unnatural crime) are deceitful, when used in place of argument; since by a reference to these, or an exclusive dependence upon them, either side of many a question may be tolerably established. A question should first be clearly determined on the conclusions of solid argument, and then it may be illustrated by examples and customs; but if these latter are to be brought as argumentative proofs, every man may form his opinion upon his own inclination, because every man may find instances and practices in his own favour; neither is there any crime but what may be proved “natural” by the adduction of examples and customs in its defence. In determining also on the degree of influence due to examples, much depends on the temper, the cast of mind, the education, the principles, and previous character, of the individual, whose life or death is exposed to public view as thus exemplary: and with regard to laws and customs, the religion, the genius, the policy, the degree of civilization, as well as many incidental circumstances at the time of the institution and observance of such laws and practices, are

are to be especially regarded, before any just judgment can be formed of their weight and efficacy. All therefore that has been advanced in any parts of the present inquiry, either for or against the practice of suicide, on the strength of private opinions, of ancient examples and customs, has been brought forward with a view to illustration rather than argument.

Donne's second Part—"Of the Law of Reason."

" Reason (he says) in this place shall signify conclusions drawn and deduced
 " from the primary reason, by our discourse and ratiocination ; and so sin against
 " reason is sin against such arguments and conclusions, as may by good conse-
 " quence be derived from primary and original reason, which is light of nature.
 " This primary reason therefore, against which none can plead licence, law,
 " custom, or pardon, hath in us a sovereign and masculine force ; and by it,
 " through our discourse, which doth the motherly office of shaping them,
 " and bringing them forth and up, it produces conclusions and resolutions.
 " And because assemblies of parliaments, and councils, and courts, are to be
 " presumed more diligent for the delivery and obstetrication of those children
 " of natural law, and are better witnesses, that no false or supposititious issue
 " be admitted, than any one man can be, it deserves the first consideration in
 " this Part, to inquire, how far human laws have determined against it, before
 " we descend to the arguments of particular authors of whatsoever reverence or
 " authority. And because in this disquisition, that law hath most force and
 " value, which is most general—to my understanding, the " Civil or Imperial"
 " law, having had once the largest extent, and being not abandoned now in
 " the reason, essence, and nature thereof, claims the first place in this conside-
 " ration. This therefore, which we call the civil law (for though properly the
 " municipal law of every nation be her civil law, yet Rome's emperors esteem-
 " ing the whole world to be one city, as her bishops do esteem it one diocese,
 " the Roman law hath won the name of civil law)—this law, I say, which is
 " so abundant, that almost all the points controverted between the Roman and
 " the reformed churches may be decided and appointed by it ;—this law, which
 " both by penalties and anathemas, hath wrought upon bodies, fortunes, and
 " consciences, hath pronounced nothing against this self-homicide, except in
 " the case of soldiers or accused persons under certain descriptions."—Though
 the

the Roman law as collected by Justinian was a wonderful business, and though it be justly venerated, as the ground-work of all modern jurisprudence, as well as of much ecclesiastical discipline [R], yet it is not therefore to be accounted so unexceptionable and infallible in all its parts, as to be made the universal standard of right reason. This subject has been fully considered in the chapter on Roman suicide (Part IV. C. vii.), wherein it has been found, that suicide was so little in practice during the purer ages of the republic, as that it needed no legal restrictions; and accordingly we find no determinate ones;—that when (from causes there assigned) it grew frequent among the Romans, so that some check was deemed necessary, no consideration was had to the natural crime of suicide (the nation being then too degenerate and profligate to punish any crime, “as a crime in itself,” but only as it affected the state or the imperial coffers. It will therefore be readily granted, that all punishment of suicide by Roman law was of a civil or fiscal nature, and that we must not look to that law for its sinful condemnation. But it must also be remembered, that, though the Roman empire was so extensive, the Roman law had particular respect to the customs and manners of the Romans themselves; and that they either made no laws against suicide, when it was little practised among them, or such laws about it afterwards, as were suitable to the corrupted and vitiated principles of the times in which they were enacted.

Donne next proceeds to an examination of “Canon” law respecting suicide. But as he is aware that canon law severely censures the practice, he sets off with shrewdly remarking, “that civil laws content themselves ever with any excuse or colour in favour of the delinquent, because when the fault is proved, they punish severely; but the canon laws punish only medicinally and for the soul’s health; and therefore are apt to presume or believe a guiltiness upon light evidence, because these punishments ever work good effects, whether just or not.”—From hence he would insinuate, that whatever is found in canon law relative to the punishment of suicide is stretched beyond just bounds. But pursuing his own thread of reasoning in the above quotation, he must equally allow, that civil law sets too lightly by the crime of suicide, as unwilling to

[R] Justinian (who reigned in the sixth century) not only collected the Roman civil law—but likewise all those laws, which related to ecclesiastical matters; to which he subjoined a number of his edicts under the title of *Novellæ*.

punish it; a point to which in all probability he would not yield his assent, and therefore he has no right to draw any inference favourable to his own opinions on the contrary side, or at least to expect the concurrence of his opponents in so doing.—He says, “that heresy is the principal object of canon law; but that “self-murder is no where condemned as heretical.”—True; because no age of Christianity can be ascertained, in which an opinion prevailed of the lawfulness of suicide, as a christian doctrine. Enthusiastic individuals indeed professing christianity and too eager in their immediate pursuit of another life, had recourse to it on many occasions (such were the Donatists in particular); but it being never held as a doctrine or tenet by any sect of Christians, there was no room to censure it, as an heretical opinion, and in consequence a total silence must prevail with respect to suicide in all councils, which touched on doctrinal points alone. But there was another object of canon law as principal as heresy, and that was “discipline”:—this is the proper place to seek for the punishment of suicide, and here we accordingly find it noticed.—Donne only mentions the first council of Braga held An. Dom. 563; from whence he quotes the sixteenth canon to be as follows. “For those that kill themselves there shall be no commemo-
“ration at the oblation, nor shall they be brought to burial with psalms”; which intimates (he adds) “canine sepulture”.—And the synod of Antisiodorum or Auxerre held An. Dom. 578, which says, “If any kill themselves, let
“not their oblations be received.” [s] On these he argues thus. “As the civil
“laws by limitation of persons and causes gave some restraint and correction to
“this natural desire of dying when we would, which they did out of a duty
“to finew and strengthen, as much as they were able, the doctrine of our blessed
“Saviour; who, having determined all bloody sacrifices, enlightens us to ano-
“ther doctrine, that to endure the miseries and afflictions of this life, was
“wholesome and advantageous to us;—the councils also perceiving, that this
“first ingrafted and inborn desire [r] needed all restraints, contributed their
“help. It seems then, that preaching and catechizing had wrestled and fought
“against the natural appetite (or wish of dying) and tamed men to a perplexity,
“whether self-murder might be done or not: and so thinking to make sure

[s] Donne hastens over this part of his subject, as proving so much against him. But for a full account of councils and decrees made in them against suicide, see Part V. C. i.

[r] Now the ingrafted and inborn desire is generally held to be towards life not death.

“work,

“ work, in an indiscreet devotion, they gave oblations to the church, to expiate
 “ the fault if any there were. These oblations the councils forbade to be ac-
 “ cepted; not decreeing any thing of the point as of matter of faith, but
 “ providing against an inconvenient practice. It proves also in respect to re-
 “ fusal of burial, that such refusal did not imply in canon law a necessary dam-
 “ nation; that the refusal was done in order to awe the living, but left the
 “ dead in the same state as if they had been pompously buried. This proves,
 “ that we are not authorised by church-councils to pronounce so desperately of
 “ the damnation of every suicide.” Though with respect to necessary damna-
 tion in every instance it may be readily acknowledged, that these councils, and
 some others which were produced in a former chapter, declare not so perempto-
 rily or uncharitably, yet it plainly appears from them, that the censures of the
 church were meant to be very severe against suicide, by such an exclusion from
 the usual rites and ceremonies of christian sepulture: and as to all Donne ad-
 vances of these canons being framed “ in order to check that first ingrafted
 “ and inborn desire, which all men have of dying,” it is a mere suggestion of
 his own and contrary to all human experience. Their design was to reprobate
 a custom, which so palpably contradicts the patience and submission of a chris-
 tian life.

Next to the general laws of the empire and those of the church, Donne
 ranks the laws of particular states, and begins with those of our own island.
 “ By our law (he says) a suicide forfeits his goods, whether chargeable with
 “ any previous offence or not: and it is not only homicide but murder—yet
 “ the reasons alledged are only these—that the king has lost a subject, that
 “ his peace is broken, and that it is of evil example. But such a law having
 “ neither foundation in natural nor in imperial law, nor receiving much
 “ strength from these reasons, can only be founded in custom (as most of our
 “ English law is) and that custom introduced amongst us, because we exceeded
 “ in that natural desire of so dying. For it is not a better understanding of
 “ nature, which has reduced us from it, but the wisdom of law-makers and
 “ observers of things fit for the institution and conservation of states. Though
 “ slavery is worn out amongst us, yet the number of wretched men exceeds
 “ the happy (for every labourer is miserable and beast-like in respect of the
 “ idle, abounding men). It was therefore thought necessary by laws and by
 “ opinion

“ opinion of religion, to take from these weary and macerated wretches their
 “ ordinary and open escape and ease—voluntary death: and this natural decli-
 “ nation in our people to such a manner of death, which weakened the state,
 “ might occasion “severer” laws than the common grounds of all laws seem
 “ well to bear. In contemplation of these laws I mourn that the infirmities
 “ and sickness of our nation should need such medicines. The like must be
 “ said of the like law in the earldom of Flanders. If it be true, that they
 “ allow confiscation of goods in only five cases, whereof this is one; and so it
 “ is ranked with treason, heresy, sedition, and forsaking the army against the
 “ Turk, which be strong and urgent circumstances to reduce men from this
 “ desire. But because you find many and severe laws against a particular
 “ offence, it is not safe from thence to conclude an extreme enormity or heinous-
 “ ness in the fault itself, but a propenseness of that people, at that time, to
 “ that fault. Severe laws do no more aggravate a fault than mild punishments
 “ diminish it. If therefore our or the Flemish law be severe in punishing it,
 “ and that this argument have the more strength, because more nations concur
 “ in such laws, it may well be retorted from hence, “ that every where men
 “ are inclinable to it;” which establisheth much our opinion, considering that
 “ none of those laws, which prescribe civil restraints from doing it, can make
 “ it sin; and the act is not much discredited, if it be but therefore evil, because
 “ it is so forbidden, and binds the conscience no further, but under the general
 “ precept of obedience to the law or to the forfeiture.”—The state of the law
 of England relative to the punishment of suicide has been considered at large in
 a former chapter (Part V. C. ii. and iii.); when what was desirable, and what
 seemed inexpedient in it, was fully pointed out; and therefore needs not repe-
 tition here. It will be sufficient to make a few general observations on the
 above passage.

Imperial law was very partial in this case, determining nothing on the cri-
 minality or otherwise of the act of self-murder; nor did it even proceed on the
 liberal scale of benefit or detriment to the community at large, but acted chiefly
 (as has been often observed) with a view to fiscal interest. Indeed a total in-
 difference generally prevailed in all heathen legislation to such points of morality,
 as did not immediately tend to some political advantage. As to natural law, it
 becomes very much blended with civil or political law, when a man becomes

social or a member of a community ; which being the case, even setting aside for the present, what we by no means consent to do in reality, all natural arguments against suicide, yet the political reasons above-mentioned, viz. “ that the king has lost a subject, that the peace is broken, and that it is of evil example,” are very strong and cogent motives for severely censuring the act of suicide in itself. If a subject be lost to the country, it is right to inquire, “ by what means ?”—if not by legal ones, “ the peace of the state is evidently broken,” which is “ of evil example” to surviving subjects ; who, if such infringements were to pass unnoticed and uncensured, might be led to condemn those laws in other instances also, which they saw were transgressed with impunity in this. Here then, even independent of moral judgment, are very urgent grounds for severely stigmatizing suicide with every opprobrious name, and in every disgraceful shape ; and hence that custom is well founded, which endeavours by the severity of censure to deter others from its commission. Donne observes, that a severe punishment does not “ necessarily” imply an extraordinary heinousness in the offence, as it may sometimes be imposed in order to check a propensity to that particular crime ; and his general observation is true. But when he goes on to suppose this to have been the case in England, and that a too great propensity to suicide was the cause of establishing so severe a punishment in our island, he goes further than he can justify. For he must first of all prove, what would not so easily be done, that this severity of punishment “ originated” in our island, and was inflicted in consequence of an extraordinary propensity ; whereas the contrary is the case, that we derived this kind of punishment from our continental conquerors. But here again he seems to clinch his favourite argument. For taking this for granted, that the punishment of suicide is extraordinarily severe, and allowing it to exist in other nations besides our own, and affirming it to have been established in consequence of as extraordinary a propensity to self-murder in them also, rather than as being due to the heinousness of the crime itself, he artfully insinuates from thence the truth of his assertion concerning the natural propensity of mankind “ in general” to suicide, as it “ every where” needs such extraordinary restraints. But his shrewd conclusion may be overturned at once, by denying the truth of those premises he takes for granted without proof, viz. that the punishment is too severe for the offence (which is no less than murder), or that it was established in consequence of an extraordinary propensity towards its practice. There may

be different opinions indeed concerning the “mode” in which self-murder should be censured, when yet all may agree, that a severe reprobation is necessary. (See Part V. C. iii.)

It may be observed in answer to another part of the above quotation, that though it be allowed that no action is sinful, but as it is forbidden by some law or other, human or divine, yet it is not always a readiness to submit to the penalty annexed to its breach, that suffices to re-establish a culprit's innocence. Take a single instance. Is the adulterer innocent, because he declares from the beginning, that he is ready to pay any amercement that shall be awarded by law to the injured husband? A man cannot indeed be twice punished by human law for the same offence, he has satisfied the law indeed, but will that liberate his conscience? So the suicide may say, let the legislature seize all my property, I yield it willingly (having no further occasion for it). But will this decide on the innocence of the action? There is a divine, as well as human, transgression for which atonement is to be made. But there are many situations indeed and actions in society truly indifferent in their own nature, where a submission to the penalty annexed to the non-performance of the duty takes away all possible offence. As for instance, a citizen is called upon to fill a certain office, or to pay such a pecuniary fine: he chooses the latter, and there ends the business. But here two actions are proposed and a choice admitted:—a case widely different from a compensation for an offence previously committed. That citizen also finds but little respect or rather is studiously avoided and guarded against, who having committed certain offences one after another, has nevertheless satisfied the law for them all by fines or imprisonments: he is scarcely to be deemed an harmless citizen or an innocent man. It is trifling therefore to make so general an assertion, as that a submission to penalties re-establishes innocence, without having first proved the action in itself perfectly indifferent: but this mode of arguing, when applied to suicide, returns us again to all those reasons, on which through this whole inquiry we have condemned its principle and practice; and which therefore need no repetition here.

Donne then mentions the Jewish custom adverted to by Josephus, of not burying a suicide till after sun-set;—the Athenian practice of cutting off the hand;—the punishment annexed to self-murder by Tarquinius Priscus, and also that of the Milesian virgins. “All these customs and practices (he says)

“ only prove a watchful solicitude in every state by all means to avert men
 “ from this natural love of ease, by which the strength of the state would have
 “ been impaired. They are founded on a reason common to all nations, a
 “ desire of deterring other men from the practice rather than of punishing it
 “ being done.” The impossibility of punishing the murderer of himself in his
 own person being notorious, what can any nation do further than endeavour to
 deter others from pursuing the self-murderer’s example by marking his conduct
 with infamy and disgrace?

Donne next proceeds to a consideration of the reasons urged by particular
 men (of the ecclesiastical order) against this action, which are not founded on
 scripture; as he reserves these latter for another Part. He first quotes some
 passages from the fathers, as collected by [u] Gratian; particularly from
 Augustin’s epistle to Donatus the heretic, “ who having been apprehended by
 “ the catholics, fell from his horse, and would have drowned himself: and
 “ afterwards complains of violence used towards him in matter of religion,
 “ wherein he claims the freedom of election and conscience. Augustin
 “ answers; “ we have power to endeavour to save thy soul against thy will, as
 “ it was lawful to us to save thy body so. If thou wert constrained to
 “ do evil, yet thou oughtest not to kill thyself. Consider, whether in the
 “ scriptures, thou find any of the faithful that did so, when they suffered
 “ much from them, who would have forced them to do things to their
 “ soul’s destruction.” Augustin likewise writes purposely against suicide
 “ in his first book *De Civitate Dei*. Now I agree (continues Donne) with
 “ St. Augustin—that neither to avoid occasion of sin, nor for any other
 “ cause, wherein myself am merely or principally interested, I may do this act;
 “ which also serves justly for answer to the same zealous father in the other
 “ place cited by Gratian; for with him I confess—that he, who kills him-
 “ self [x], is so much the more guilty herein, as he was guiltless of that fact
 “ for which he killed himself. And so we say with as much earnestness as he
 “ did (*hoc asserimus, hoc dicimus, hoc omnibus modis approbamus*), that
 “ neither to avoid temporal trouble, nor to remove from others occasions of
 “ sins, nor to punish our own past sins, nor to prevent future, nor in a desire

[u] Gratian was a monk, who flourished in the twelfth century, and collected the canons, &c.

[x] See *De Civitate Dei*, Lib. I. and see this opinion answered in Part III. C. ii.

“ of the next life (where these considerations are only or principally) it can be
 “ lawful for any man to kill himself. But neither St. Augustin nor we deny, but
 “ that if there be cases, wherein the party is disinterested, and only or primarily
 “ the glory of God is respected and advanced, it may be lawful. So St. Au-
 “ gustin hath condemned those causes, which we defend not, but hath omitted
 “ those, wherein it is justifiable.”—But the fact is, Augustin omitted assigning
 such cases, as Donne thinks justifiable, because, as it seemed to that father,
 no such cases were assignable, in which the glory of God or cause of religion
 could be exalted by a pure and voluntary suicide, or by which some great duties
 of Christianity would not at the same time be grossly violated. He speaks ten-
 derly indeed of the case of virgin-suicide for two reasons; one, because he
 thought the excess of zeal in such women pitiable, though not justifiable; the
 other, because he could not (as a good son of the church) expressly condemn
 that action, for which some of the women had obtained the high titles of saints
 and martyrs. But he has left enough in writing behind him to trace his own
 genuine and unbiassed sentiments even against virgin-suicide, as well as of all
 cases, which Donne esteems justifiable causes of suicide. Though the opinions
 of this father are pointed in so many places against all suicide, yet Donne
 passes them all over without further notice, because they would evidently make
 so much against him; maintaining also, that Augustin was of “ too nice, re-
 “ fined, and rigorous a conscience to be our director in actions of this life;”
 that is, Augustin was no defender of suicide in “ any case.” The reader how-
 ever has already seen the sentiments of Augustin traced at large (Part V. C. i.);
 from whence he will easily judge, that Donne has acted but an uncandid part
 in his treatment of the opinions of this father.

Another place quoted by Donne from Gratian consists of a passage in Jerom’s
 exposition of Jonas, where that father says—“ In persecution I may not kill
 “ myself—*absque eo, ubi castitas periclitatur.*” Now it has been generally
 thought, that Jerom in this form of expression meant to give a sort of licence
 or excuse to virgins for killing themselves in some particular cases of extreme
 persecution, in order to preserve their chastity. But Gratian interprets “ *abs-*
que eo” to mean, “ no, not though chastity be in danger;” to which interpre-
 tation Donne not only refuses his assent, but also very widely extends Jerom’s
 word—“ *castitas*”—even to its signifying, “ all purity of religion and manners;”
 and

and “to a man so rectified (says Donne) death comes ever and every way
 “ (meaning by suicide among the rest) seasonable and welcome.” Without
 entering here into the merits of these different interpretations, which have been
 considered in another place (Part V. C. i.); nay even allowing Donne his own
 (though evidently stretched beyond all bounds of exposition), it may suffice to
 observe, that let death “come” to this rectified character, and it will always
 be welcome; but, if “accelerated by his own hands,” will always be
 unseasonable.

Donne adds, “that it is confessed by Lavater himself in his commentary on
 “Saul’s death, that in the point of preserving chastity, Augustin, Chrysostom,
 “Lactantius, and Jerom, depart from their general opinion of the unlawfulness
 “of suicide.” In what sense this departure from their general opinion is to
 be understood, is best discovered by consulting their own writings, from which
 some quotations have already been given in another place (Part V. C. i.).

Donne says, “Peter Martyr offers a reason against suicide, which is, “Vita
 “donum Dei,—and therefore must not be profused.” But when (adds Donne)
 “we have agreed to him, that it may not be unthriftilly and prodigally cast
 “away, how will he conclude from thence, such an ingratitude, as that I shall
 “forsake God’s glory? and that I may in no case lay down my life? how will
 “it follow from I must not always, that I may never?”—The question returns
 again here, whether the commission of a voluntary suicide can ever be said to
 advance the glory of God on christian principles?—principles of which Donne
 never disputes the force and value. How we offend against the donor of life
 by shortening its thread has been already examined. (Part II. C. ii.)

“Lavater (continues Donne) follows many others in urging this reason
 “against suicide; “that because judges are established, therefore no man should
 “take dominion over himself.”—Or as it is more usually expressed—the power
 “of punishment being committed to the magistrate, no private citizen ought
 “to inflict it on himself.” Now this point has been fully discussed in another
 place (Part II. C. iii.); yet as Donne has some shrewd turns in answer, we
 must attend to them. “In the church of England (says he) where auricular
 “confession is neither under precept nor much in practice, who is judge of sin
 “against

“ against which no civil law provides, or of which there is no evidence? May
 “ I not accuse and condemn myself to myself, and inflict what penance I will
 “ for punishing the past, and avoiding like occasion of sin hereafter? When
 “ there is a proper court, I am bound to it; but in secret cases between the
 “ Spirit of God and my conscience, of which there is not certainly constituted
 “ any exterior judge, we are ourselves sufficient to do all the offices; we are
 “ then delivered from all bondage, and restored to our natural liberty—a man
 “ then becomes *fui juris*.” A man may judge and inflict as far as he pleases
 in *foro conscientiæ*, and as far as self alone is concerned; but when he thus
 judges “ for” himself, his judgment must be confined “ to” himself and his
 own merely personal concerns. But when he comes to sit in judgment on his
 “ life,” he must remember, that his social and domestic connexions, and the
 community at large, have a property in that as well as himself; and that he
 can have “ no right” to deprive himself of this without their knowledge and
 consent. The property in his life then being not absolutely and solely his own,
 he can have no exclusive power by right of his own private judgment to dispose
 of it at pleasure. To the common argument—“ that a man is not allowed to
 “ be a judge or even a witness in his own cause”—Donne artfully answers,—
 “ what is the reason or grounds of the prohibition, but that it is presumed
 “ every one would be too favourable to himself? Now in suicide a man must
 “ be said to judge of himself not favourably, but rigorously; and therefore as
 “ the grounds of the prohibition are done away in this case, so must the pro-
 “ hibition itself be, and he is at liberty to judge and condemn himself.” The
 grounds of the prohibition are, that an “ impartial” judgment may be given,
 but this is as little consistent with too rigorous, as too lenient a sentence.

“ There are many metaphorical and similitudinary reasons (continues Donne)
 “ scattered among authors, as in Cicero and Macrobius, made rather for illus-
 “ tration than for argument or answer; which I will not stand to glean amongst
 “ them, since they are almost all bound up in one sheaf in that oration of
 “ Josephus [Y]. Josephus says—“ our soul is *particula Dei*, and deposited and
 “ committed in trust to us, and we may not neglect or disharbour it, before

[Y] The harangue of Josephus to his soldiers to prevent their killing themselves has been given at length in another place.—See Part IV. C. v.

“ God withdraw it.” But we are still upon safe ground, that whensoever I
 “ may justly depart from this life, it is by a summons from God; and it can-
 “ not then be imputed to any corruption of my will. Yet I expect not ever
 “ a particular inspiration or new commission (such as they are forced to pur-
 “ chase for Samson and the rest) but that resident and inherent grace of God,
 “ by which he excites us to works of moral or higher virtues.”—It is hard to
 find out this summons of dismissal; since suicide in its best state must ever be
 repugnant to some of the highest christian virtues—such as humility and resig-
 nation. When the deposit (of life) is called for, we agree with Donne, it would
 be unjust and disobedient to detain it; but we must wait till it is called for,
 and that very clearly, by the “ right owner,” for fear of delivering it to “ an
 impostor.” This doctrine of the summons is the old stoical one, and better
 defensible on theirs than on christian principles.—Donne continues thus.
 “ Josephus has one reason drawn from the custom of an enemy. “ We esteem
 “ them enemies (says Josephus) who attempt our lives, and shall we be ene-
 “ mies to ourselves?” But there is neither certain truth in the assertion nor in
 “ the consequence. For do we esteem God or the magistrate our enemy, when
 “ by either of them death is inflicted?”—But Josephus here is only alluding to
 public enemies in the field of battle; a reference therefore to the Deity or civil
 magistrate, when he takes away our lives, is totally unapplicable. Josephus’s
 argument is this. “ Our enemies in the field are willing to spare our lives (on
 “ submission); shall we then be more cruel to ourselves than even our enemies are,
 “ by taking away that life from ourselves, which they would spare?”—“ A
 “ servant that runs away from his master (quotes Donne from Josephus) is to
 “ be punished by the law, though his master be ever so severe: much more if
 “ we run away from so indulgent a master as God is to us.”—“ I reply (sub-
 “ joins Donne) that in our case the servant runs not “ from” his master, but
 “ “ to” him, and at his call obeys his voice. It is as truly as devoutly said,
 “ the devil is overcome by resisting, but the world and the flesh by running
 “ away, and the further the better.”—This is returning again to the old doc-
 trine of the summons so often repeated. We are certainly taught, that by
 “ resisting the devil he will fly from us.” Yet what is meant by resisting the
 devil, but resisting all his insinuations and all his evil works (suicide among
 the rest) exhibiting themselves to us in the world and in the flesh?—Put not
 yourself in the way of temptation, and in that sense run away from it, and the
 further

further the better. But consider that by running away from it in the shape of suicide, you effectually run away at the same time from the performance of every virtue and every duty. “ Josephus also adds (says Donne) that in a tempest it “ were the part of an idle and treacherous pilot to sink the ship out of fear of “ a storm.” But I reply, if in a tempest, we must cast out the most precious “ ware aboard, to save the lives of the passengers, and the merchant who suf- “ fers loss thereby, cannot impute this to any nor remedy himself, how much “ more may I, when I am weather-beaten and in danger of betraying that pre- “ cious soul, which God hath embarked in me, put off this burdenous flesh, “ till it be his pleasure that I shall resume it? For this is not to sink the ship, “ but to retire it to safe harbour and assured anchor.”—In the hour of danger and trial we are bid to trust in God for his grace and assistance to support the cause of his religion. Now if we fly precipitately from this danger, we seem to doubt the strength and efficacy of the divine assistance, suffering our thoughts to dwell only on our own weakness. With regard to getting into safe harbour; the harbour may be very safe, but the merchant would be sorry and angry to see his ship return before the commander had shewn all imaginable patience and perseverance in endeavouring to accomplish the whole of his voyage: but such perseverance is ever cut short by the impatience of suicide.

Donne next proceeds to the consideration of reasons produced against suicide from grounds of moral virtues. “ Thomas Aquinas (says Donne) argues that “ self-murder is against justice and charity. Against justice, both because he “ steals from the state a member of the body, and also, because he usurps the “ right of God. But then (Donne answers) they are equally unjust, who retire “ from the business of the state, to attend only on their own private concerns.” —They certainly are unjust, when the circumstances of the state require their public assistance and they refuse it: otherwise a man may be actually serving the state, when he is faithfully fulfilling the duties of a private station, and of his own immediate concerns. But how does its being unjust in certain cases in the one, exculpate the other? The man, who retires from public services, may or may not be unjust and culpable in so doing according to circumstances; but he still remains to perform his duty to the state in his private station; whereas the self-murderer deprives himself of all opportunities of being further serviceable, whether as a public or private citizen; and therefore he is “ unjust” in every
VOL. II. F capacity.

capacity.—“ It is not injustice (says Donne) to God’s authority, because though
 “ we have not the “ dominion,” we have the “ use” of our lives, which use
 “ we may resign, when we will. And if we may not kill ourselves, because
 “ God is the only lord of our lives, then the state cannot take away our lives,
 “ which has no more power over them than ourselves. If it were an injury to
 “ the state, the state might forego it, and give licence to do it, which would ex-
 “ cuse in conscience ; because the state may *cedere de re sua*. If the state was
 “ injured by the action, it might recompence itself for the injury on the goods
 “ of the delinquent ; which it does not, except when there is express law for
 “ the purpose.”—A full answer has been already given to all the particulars con-
 tained in the last quotation in foregoing chapters relative to its offence against
 the Deity and society, to which the reader is referred to avoid repetition. (See
 Part II. C. ii. & iii.)—Donne allows suicide in a man eminently useful to be
 some degree of injustice to the state,—“ of the same sort (he says) as if a great
 “ general should retire into a monastery.”—The point of charity Donne defers
 to his last Part ; because many texts of scripture are concerned in it ; he only
 remarks here, “ that if suicide be a sin against charity, it is a greater breach of
 “ charity to pronounce so desperately against every one, who happens to commit
 “ it :”—to which opinion it would be uncharitable not to accede.

Donne then proceeds to consider those arguments which he produces of his
 own, or which he quotes from others, as tending to invalidate the charge against
 suicide either “ a toto or a tanto,” as he speaks. He first mentions the custom
 of asking leave of the Roman senate, and Quintilian’s declamation on that head ;
 both which points have been considered elsewhere. (See Part IV. C. vi.)

“ In all laws (he says) in such faults as are greatest, either in their own na-
 “ ture or in an irremediableness when they are done, all approaches, yea the
 “ very first step towards them, hath the same guiltiness, and lies under the
 “ same punishment, as the fault itself: the first consent is the absolute fault.
 “ Now homicide is one of those crying sins and hath ever been reckoned in
 “ atrocibus ; and it may be done (as Tolet says) five ways ; 1, by command-
 “ ment : 2, by advice : 3, by permission : 4, by help : 5, by the fact itself. If
 “ then every one of these be a kind of homicide, no approach towards it can
 “ be lawful, if any be lawful, that is not homicide. Let us therefore consider,
 “ how

“ how far and in how many of these ways self-homicide may be allowable.
 “ The first—“ commandment”—does not properly belong to self-homicide ; we
 “ cannot properly work upon ourselves by way of precept or command, because
 “ in this act the same party must be agent, and patient, and instrument. Nor
 “ very properly by the second way—“ of advice” ; yet so near we may come to
 “ the nature of it, that after discourse (or deliberation) we may advisedly choose
 “ one part and refuse the other ; and thus wish to ourselves that which is na-
 “ turally evil, I mean *malum pœnæ*. Thus certainly in some cases we may
 “ without sin wish for death ; and that not only for enjoying the sight of God,
 “ but even to be so delivered from the incumbrances of this life ; but we must
 “ not wish for what is evil ;—therefore death is no evil, seeing we may wish
 “ for it. Why then is it evil to further that with more actual help, which
 “ we may lawfully wish to be done ? It is not lawful to “ wish” the death of
 “ another person, without it be lawful also to accomplish it ;—and why not the
 “ same in those cases, where it is acknowledged to be lawful to wish our own ?”
 —His whole argument turns on this point. “ If we do not wish for what is
 evil, we may endeavour to promote our wishes to the utmost of our power : but
 death being allowed to be no evil in certain cases, it may not only be wished
 for by us, but promoted by self-homicide.” Death may be no evil in itself to
 a man under certain circumstances, he may even lawfully wish and desire it ;
 but though the thing itself may not be evil that he wishes, the methods he takes
 of bringing it about, or of accomplishing his wishes, may be so. We may
 wish for “ riches” ; they are no evil in themselves, neither is there evil in as-
 piring after them by innocent ways and for laudable purposes. But yet our
 pursuit of them is evil, when we endeavour to obtain them by improper me-
 thods or for sinful uses. We may lawfully wish to be rid of life’s incumbrances,
 and even of life itself, when over-burdened with cares, but it is possible we may
 use improper methods of getting rid of these incumbrances, this burden of
 life. We may lawfully wish to be with God in a better life, but we must not
 take improper means of hastening our arrival there. In short, as certain cir-
 cumstances must determine our wishes themselves, so others must ascertain the
 propriety of pursuing them.

“ The next species of homicide (as Donne goes on) is by “ permission” ;
 “ which when applied to self-homicide, is usually called by the schoolmen, “ de-

“ fersion, dereliction, or mors negativa”; and he fums up this head in the following manner; having first endeavoured to prove each point in the body of the fectiion with much fcholaflic fubtilty and cafuiftry. “ Since we may wave
 “ our defence which “ law” gives, by putting ourfelves upon a jury, and which
 “ “ nature” gives to repel force by force; fince I may without flying, or eating
 “ when I have means, attend an executioner or famine; fince I “ may” offer
 “ my life even for another’s temporal good, fince I “ muft” do it for his fpi-
 “ ritual; fince I may give another my board in a fhipwreck, and fo drown my-
 “ felf; fince I may haften my arrival to heaven by confuming penances,—it is
 “ but a wayward and unnoble ftubbornnefs in argument to fay ftill, I muft
 “ not kill myfelf, but I may let myfelf die; fince of affirmations and denials,
 “ of omiffions and committings, of enjoining and prohibitory commands, ever
 “ the one implies and enwraps the other. And if the matter fhall be refolved
 “ and governed only by an outward act and ever by that ;—if I forbear to fwim
 “ being in a river and fo perifh, becaufe there is no act, I fhall not be guilty;
 “ and I fhall be guilty, if I difcharge a piftol upon myfelf, which I knew not
 “ to be charged nor intended harm, becaufe there is an act.”—It would be tedious and unprofitable to follow him through all his cafuiftry in maintaining thefe feveral points [z]. Many of them are too indefenfible even to need pointing out, and the beft of them,—fuch as yielding up our own lives in extremities, to preferve thofe we think more valuable—may receive this general answer: that in acting thus, the compaffing our own deaths (which conftitutes the genuine idea of fuidice) is “ not” our immediate and firft point in view, but the accomplifhing fome other defign; fuch as endeavouring to preferve the life of another, whom we efteem of fo much more confequence than ourfelves, that we are willing to run the utmoft hazard of our own lives, or even to refign them for his fake: in which cafe therefore ftrictly fpeaking there is no proper fuidice, or primary defire of compaffing our own deaths.

[z] If any reader of the prefent age fhould be inclined to dive deeper than this examination of Donne leads him into cafuiftical arguments on the fubject of fuidice, he will find them difcuffed with all the fubtilties of fcholaflic diftinctions, &c. in the writings of Thomas Aquinas, Navar, Sayr, &c. Donne however is its only champion among them: and as for its oppugners, though their conclufions are juft and true, that it is utterly unlawful, yet there is often more difficulty in attempting to unravel the intricacies and perplexities of their “ diftributive” mode of arguing, than in yielding an affent at firft fight to the propofition or cafe in queftion.

“ The

“ The fourth species of homicide (says Donne) short of the act itself, is “ helping and concurring” to it; which is esteemed in law equal to doing it. “ If then a man may ever lawfully help and concur to his own death, he is “ equally at liberty to (or may as well) kill himself outright.” An instance is then brought in point by Donne, in which he says, it is confessedly lawful to help forward our own death, which is, that “ of a person’s going voluntarily “ before a magistrate and confessing a crime, of which death is the punishment; “ but which otherwise might not have been discovered.”—This is certainly lawful, and such an one may truly be said to help forward his own death. But if narrowly investigated, it is perhaps a clearer case in point on the other side of the question; namely to prove, that it “ may” be lawful to help forward our death, when it would “ not” be lawful to kill ourselves outright. Donne himself does not allow, that it is ever lawful to commit suicide in order to escape justice; but he allows it to be lawful for a man to give himself up voluntarily to justice, though his death be the certain consequence: Donne allows then an instance (and has brought it himself) in which a man may lawfully hasten forward his own death, when he might not lawfully commit suicide. But it may be further answered; that in the matter of self-accusation, it is not solely or primarily the desire of compassing his own death, which leads a criminal to a voluntary discovery of his offences (since he could have effected that by the much shorter method of self-murder); but being struck with a consciousness of guilt, repentance seizes him; he feels the horror of his crime, and seeks to do all the reparation in his power to the injured laws of his country by a voluntary and ample confession, and by a submission to their awards whatever they may be. His life was forfeited from the first commission of the crime, and he feels a desire of satisfying justice by yielding up the forfeit in an exemplary manner, not of stealing it away under the dark shelter of suicide [A].

“ The last species (continues Donne) is the “ act itself”; which how far it is “ lawful having been discussed under my first Part, “ of Law and Nature;” and “ being about to be canvassed again in my third Part, “ Of the Law of God “ or Christianity”—nothing more need be said of it here than to present such

[A] Many are the instances of criminals thus voluntarily delivering up themselves to justice on the horrors of conscience; especially in cases of murder; but no one ever reckoned such among the number of self-murderers.

deduc-

“deductions, comparisons, and consequences, as seem to me to annihilate or
 “diminish the fault.” He grounds these on two points; “the conscience of
 the doer, and the church’s opinion of the fact, when it is done.” As to the first;
 “No man (says he) must act against his conscience, even though it be weak
 “and misinformed. If then any one does in his conscience believe himself in-
 “vited by the spirit of God to commit suicide, who can condemn this to be
 “sin?”—An action (as has been observed before) may be sinful in its general
 nature, yet not culpable with regard to the doer of it in some particular instance
 of its commission. A person certainly ought never to act against his conscience,
 which he is bound however to inform to the best of his power; and also care-
 fully to distinguish to the best of his judgment, between the spirit of God (as
 he may think it) and the spirit of illusion: and there is no surer way to enable
 us to judge of this distinction than to consider the nature of the work we seem
 tempted to commit. If it be evil in its general nature, we ought to “suspect”
 an illusion over ourselves, as God can never tempt a man to evil.

Donne then mentions a few examples of suicide recorded in ecclesiastical
 writers, to whose honour and reputation for the very act itself the church bears
 ample testimony. His first is, the church’s celebration of the martyrdom of
 the virgin Apollonia, “who, after the persecutors had beaten out her teeth,
 “and vexed her with many other tortures, when she was presented to the fire,
 “being enflamed with a more burning fire of the Holy Ghost, broke from the
 “officers’ hands, and leaped into the fire.”—This only showed her readiness to
 die in defence of her faith; but leaping into that fire, which was ready lit for
 her burning, had little to do with the spirit of suicide. “The virgin Pelagia
 “also (he adds) threw herself with much ceremony into a river and was drowned
 “in order to preserve her chastity; which action was highly celebrated by the
 “church; nor did any author ever attempt to diminish the glory of this and
 “other suicides of the same nature before Augustin, who out of his most zea-
 “lous and startling tenderness of conscience began to seek out some ways, how
 “these self-homicides might be justified, because he doubted that this act na-
 “turally was not exempt from taxation.”—Augustin seems at a loss how to
 justify the church’s religious memorial of such suicide, but upon the presump-
 tion of some divine impetus or instinct to perform it; for otherwise he judges
 the action to be indefensible. “If God inspired them (says he) who can gain-
 “say

“ say the action ? but care must be taken to be thoroughly satisfied of such
 “ inspiration. When holy virgins destroyed themselves (as many did) to avoid
 “ pollution from their persecutors, what human heart could choose but pity
 “ them ? but as for those, who would not destroy themselves under like dan-
 “ gers, for fear lest by avoiding another’s villainy they should incur their own
 “ damnation, he that imputes this as a fault to them, is not free from the fault
 “ of folly.” Augustin’s sentiments of suicide having been fully set forth else-
 where, no more need be added in this place. (See Part V. C. i.) “ A con-
 “ currence of examples approved and dignified by the church is equivalent
 “ (says Donne) to its having established rules and sanctions about it.” But
 may not the most bloody persecutions in like manner be said to be justified and
 sanctified by having experienced the same sort of approbation and dignity ?

Donne’s third Part concerns the “ Law of God or Christianity.” Having
 already considered the whole contents of this division (see Part III. C. ii.) ;
 there remains nothing to be added concerning it here ; but only to ask the
 reader’s patience for quoting the following passage, with which Donne opens
 this part, which has much good sense and strong allusion in it. “ That light
 “ (says he) which issues from the moon doth best represent and express that
 “ which in ourselves we call the light of nature ; for as that in the moon is
 “ the same in itself, but with regard to us at times unequal, various, pale and
 “ languishing, so is our light of nature changeable. For being at the first
 “ kindling at full, it wained presently, and by departing further and further
 “ from God, declined by general sin, to an almost total eclipse ; till God coming
 “ nearer to us, first by the law and then by grace, enlightened and repaired it
 “ again conveniently to his ends, for further exercise of his mercy and justice.
 “ And then those artificial lights which ourselves make for our use and service,
 “ as fires, tapers and such like, resemble the light of reason. For though the
 “ light of these fires be not so natural as the moon, yet because they are more
 “ domestic and obedient to us, we distinguish particular objects better by them
 “ than by the moon ; so by the arguments, and deductions, and conclusions,
 “ which ourselves beget and produce, as being more serviceable and under us,
 “ because they are our creatures, particular cases are made more clear and evi-
 “ dent to us ; for these we can be bold withal, and put them to any office, and
 “ examine and prove their truth or likelihood, and make them answer as
 “ long

“ long as we will ask: whereas the light of nature with a solemn and super-
 “ cillious majesty will speak but once, and give no reason or endure examination.
 “ But because of these two kinds of light, the first is too weak and the other
 “ false, (for only colour is the object of sight, and we do not trust candle-light
 “ to discern colours) we have therefore the “ Sun,” which is the fountain and
 “ treasure of all created light, for an emblem of that third best light of our
 “ understanding, which is the “ Word of God.” But yet as weak, credulous
 “ men think sometimes they see two or three suns, when they see none but
 “ meteors or other appearances; so are many transported with like faculty or
 “ dazzling, that for some opinions, which they maintain, they think they
 “ have the light and authority of scripture, when God knows, “ Truth,” which
 “ is the light of scripture, is truly under them and removed in the furthest that
 “ can be. If any small place of scripture misappear to them to be of use for
 “ justifying any opinion of theirs; then (as the word of God hath that precious
 “ nature of gold, that a little quantity thereof, by reason of a faithful tenacity
 “ and ductileness, will be brought to cover ten thousand times as much of any
 “ other metal) they extend it so far, and labour, and beat it to such a thin-
 “ ness, as it is scarce any longer the word of God, only to give their other
 “ reasons a little tincture and colour of gold, though they have lost all its
 “ weight and estimation.” This is too true of the zealous defenders of most
 controverted opinions in every age.

In his “ Conclusion” Donne argues thus against his opponents. “ If rea-
 “ sons which differ from me and my reasons be otherwise equal, yet theirs have
 “ this disadvantage, that they fight with themselves, and suffer a civil war of
 “ contradiction. For many of their reasons incline us to a love of life and an
 “ horror of death; and yet they say often, that we are too much addicted to
 “ that naturally.” But in the first place, we do not allow the reasons to be
 equal on both sides, nor if we did, does he fairly represent our views. We al-
 low men to be too much addicted to a love of life, when they commit unlawful
 or sinful actions to preserve it; and to have too great a horror of death, when
 they wish to escape it at any rate, be it ever so sinful. On the other hand we
 wish to teach men so to love life, as not rashly to throw it away; so to dread
 death, as not to bring it voluntarily on themselves; but to go on in a strait
 course of right conduct, and to leave the event of things—the termination of
 life—in the hands of Providence:—

“ Nor

“ Nor love thy life nor hate; but what thou liv’st,
“ Live well: how long or short permit to Heaven.”

MILTON, Par. Lost, B. XI.

“ In punishment of Adam’s sin (continues Donne) God cast upon us an
“ infectious death, and since hath sent us a worse plague of men, which ac-
“ company it with so much horreur and affrightment, that it can scarce be
“ made wholesome and agreeable to us. But though I thought it needful to
“ oppose this opinion, as well to re-encourage men to a just contempt of life, and
“ to restore them to their nature (which is a desire of supreme happiness in the
“ next life by the loss of this) as also to rectify and wish again their fame,
“ who,—religiously assuring themselves, that in some cases, when we were def-
“ titute of other means, we might be to ourselves the stewards of God’s benefits
“ and the ministers of his merciful justice,—had yet being innocent within
“ themselves incurred *damnum opinionis*, yet I abstained purposely from ex-
“ tending this discourse to particular rules or instances, both because I dare not
“ profess myself a master in so curious a science, and because the limits are
“ obscure and steepy and slippery and narrow, and every error “ deadly,” ex-
“ cept where a competent diligence being before used, a mistaking our con-
“ science may provide an excuse.”—Such being Donne’s own opinion of the
case, had he not better have let these few extraordinary instances, in which suicide
may not be so eminently culpable, and which would always have pleaded for
themselves when they happened, have passed unnoticed (especially as even too
severe a judgment upon them hurts not the party deceased) rather than have
hazarded an extension of suicide to cases unjustifiable on his own confession,
by all he has advanced with so much shrewdness and learning in its favour?—He
compares suicide to “ hellebore;” which may sometimes be “ wholesome in very
“ desperate diseases, but is in general a rank poison.” Being then so dangerous,
so poisonous in its nature, had we not better have nothing to do with it, lest
we should make a wrong application of it, which must be a “ deadly” one.
Let us rather seek out safer and more harmless methods of relief, such as strug-
gling manfully against evils, which it may be in our power to correct, and ex-
hibiting a scene of patience and resignation under those, which we must needs
suffer. Such a behaviour will either work our gradual cure in this life, or
prepare us for the reward of our extraordinary sufferings in a better.

C H A P. II.

Hume's Essay in favour of suicide.—Not easy to reduce his mode of reasoning to any logical precision:—must therefore be answered by piece-meal.—Hume deceives by his elegance of style.—His philosophy a mixture of scepticism and infidelity.—A proposal of doubts and difficulties his ruling passion in philosophy.—His application of the term “Superstition” highly censurable.—Metaphysical arguments not adapted to plain, moral subjects—Superstition with Hume a cant word for all religion, especially the Christian.—His false application of a passage in Tully.—Further evils of Hume's use of the word Superstition considered.—His general assertion, that “all” the ancient philosophers approved of suicide, refuted.—His proofs, “that suicide is no transgression of our duty to God,” proposed and answered.—His confusion and sophistry in what he styles, “the general and immutable laws of Providence and their operations,” noticed.—His position, “that men are to consult their own ease and happiness,” how far allowable.—His conclusion, “that it is no offence against God, because it is no offence to encroach on the general laws of matter and motion, on which human life depends,” proved erroneous in all respects.—His assertion, “that the general laws of matter and motion are equally invaded by our attempts at preserving, as destroying our lives,” refuted.—Hume's idea “of man's life being too unimportant for the Deity to concern himself about,” censured.—Lives of a philosopher and an oyster compared on Hume's own idea.—“Insignificant causes, which may produce a man's death, urged by Hume, as an argument; that life may be disposed of without offence;”—this answered.—The absurdity of his notion, “that the suicide is thankful to Providence, when he retires from life; whilst he, who thinks it his duty to endure pain, is the repiner at Providence.”—How far the actions of men are to be considered as the operations of the Deity, in contradiction to Hume's assertions.—His assertion, “that if our lives be not at our own disposal, we have no more right to put them in danger than to put an end to them,” refuted.—In what shape suicide offends against the dispensations of Providence, though it does not “hurt” the order of the universe, in answer to Hume.—His curious assortment of superstitions noticed.—His ideas of the post or station censured.—Reflections on the nature of man's life.—When the
“power”

“ power” of killing ourselves is pleaded as a passport for so doing, it equally pleads for killing another man.—Some reflections on this part of the Essay.—Hume’s arguments in respect of its being no offence against society, answered.—His plea, “ that a man, who retires from life, only ceases to do good,” answered.—The idea of reciprocation between society and an individual fairly stated; which serves to confute Hume’s erroneous assertions on this point.—His objection, “ a man is not to do a great harm to himself by living, only to do a small good perhaps to society,” answered.—The opinion, “ that because a man may resign all public offices and employments, he may therefore resign his life without offence against society,” refuted.—His argument, “ when life is burdensome to society,” answered.—Reasons, why a condemned person may not kill himself, in answer to Hume.—Reflections on this part of the essay.—Hume’s arguments, respecting its being no breach of our duty to ourselves, considered.—His principal argument respecting Self is, “ that it is our interest and duty to destroy ourselves, when life is more burdensome even than annihilation; this point cleared up.—Evident from hence, what Hume thought was to follow death.—Reflections on the character of Hume, and danger of his metaphysical writings.—A passage from Gibbon’s Roman History in favour of suicide.—Character of the “ wise man” of the modern philosophers collected from a publication entitled, “ An Apology for professing the Religion of Nature in the Eighteenth Century.”

THOUGH most of the arguments advanced in the essay ascribed to Hume [B] on the subject before us, and published since his death, have found their refutation in the body of this work, without being particularly noticed as his, yet it would be an omission to overlook a performance of this

[B] “ The writer of this article knows, that the Essays on Suicide and the Immortality of the Soul, were penned by Mr. Hume. That almost thirty years ago they made part of a volume, which was publicly advertised to be sold by Mr. Millar; that before the day fixt for publication several copies were delivered to some of the author’s friends, who were impatient to see, whatever came from his pen; that a noble lord still living threatened to prosecute Mr. Millar, if he published the essays now before us; that the author, like a bold veteran in the cause of infidelity, was not the least intimidated by this menace; but that the poor bookseller was terribly frightened;—to such a degree indeed, that he called in all the copies he had delivered, cancelled the two essays, and with some difficulty prevailed on Mr. Hume to substitute some other pieces in the room of those objected to by the noble lord; that however by some means or other a few copies got abroad and were clandestinely circulated; till at length they were published in the year 1783 (after Hume’s death) with a comment by way of antidote.”—Monthly Review for June, 1784.

nature from the pen of so celebrated a writer: it shall therefore now undergo [c] a full examination. The author of these pages has attentively perused this extraordinary essay, in hopes that he should have been able to have reduced its conclusions to some logical precision; which he would then have endeavoured to have answered in an argumentative manner. But not having been able to discover any such precision, he must be content to observe by piecemeal on what Hume advances, as well as he can; which, though a slovenly and unscholarlike method of proceeding, is yet the only one that can be used with such a slippery and insidious writer.

Of all pretenders to argument Hume perhaps in his metaphysical writings deals most in the evasion of circular sophistry. Now this proceeds not from his want of skill, but rather from its utmost exertion; since the extraordinary points he maintains are capable of no other proofs than what arise from an happy ambiguity of terms, and an illogical connexion of premises and conclusions. The elegance of expression also and fascination of language, in which his opinions are clothed, is admirably adapted to ensnare a careless and superficial reader [D]. Hume's philosophy is founded on scepticism and irreligion, with

[c] See many excellent observations on the character of Hume and his writings, and particularly on this essay on suicide, in "A Letter to Adam Smith, LL.D. by one of the People called Christians;" and in "Letters on Infidelity;"—both printed at the Clarendon-Press, Oxford, 1784. The reflections of this dignified and learned writer might well have spared the present author the trouble of drawing out this chapter on Hume, but that he wished to collect all that he was able on the subject into one point of view, without simple references to other books, which a reader might not have at hand to consult.

[D] The following remarks in Dr. Purkis's Commencement Sermon preached before the University of Cambridge 1786, are equally judicious and true. "In the first periods of society men inquiring after what is essential to their immediate peace and welfare, steadily pursue such fundamental truths as enforce their general duty. But it is a fact too well ascertained by experience, that when learning becomes the "amusement" of a people, the variety of opinions, which are then sent abroad by vain and injudicious writers, contribute greatly to unsettle the minds of the multitude. Captivated only by novelty many are seduced from their former serious turn of thinking, by every appearance of argument, by flashes of wit, "by philosophy and vain deceit, by traditions of men and the rudiments of the world." This is not confined to any particular time or people. Through each age of literature we may perceive, that minute disquisitions, fallacious systems of philosophy, sceptical doubts and a pointed turn of style, have always succeeded that pure and chaste reasoning, which is found while men are busied with such inquiries as come within the limits of their capacities.—Advocates of high rank in literature have

with an occasional mixture of all sorts of opinions and tenets, for the purpose of establishing his ruling passion, that of raising doubts and difficulties, and of unhinging thereby every solid principle of action. He evidently appears to wish to argue a supreme Being out of all care and moral government of the universe; and by raising objections to every thing, and believing nothing like other people, he seems,

“ To

have aimed by wit and imagination to confound the plain minds of unsuspicious people. Yet these writers, I affirm, have not that clearness of comprehension, that precision in their language, and that closeness in their argument, which is only to be found in minds that have early imbibed a chaste mode of composition from ancient literature, and have afterwards been habituated to scientific demonstration. For want of this we have systems of various kinds in philosophy and religion. We have minute philosophers, who comprehend all knowledge and truth within the circle of experience; and we have fanciful theorists in religion, who would unlock its mysteries with the key of natural knowledge and materialism.—Not satisfied with the assistance afforded us, or with the advancement of knowledge, which progressive experience may produce, we either precipitately solve the mysteries of Providence by a “bold paradox;” or by a denial of all truth fall into an indolent scepticism.”—PURKIS’S SERMON.

We need go no further than the other posthumous essay published with that on suicide, on the “Immortality of the Soul”—for a signal proof of the artful sophistry of Hume. His first sentence is as follows. “By the mere light of reason, it seems difficult to prove the immortality of the soul; the arguments for it are commonly derived either from metaphysical topics, or moral, or physical. But in reality it is the Gospel and the Gospel alone, that has brought “life and immortality to light.” His concluding sentence is this. “Nothing could set in a fuller light the infinite obligations, which mankind have to divine Revelation, since we find that no other medium could ascertain this great and important truth.” What orthodox divine could have said more, or what infidel meant less, to establish the credit of the Gospel?—But Hume’s insinuation is this. “The immortality of the soul (from what has been advanced in this essay) cannot be ascertained from the light of nature; and as I have taken care in various writings to throw sufficient discredit on the truth of revelation, I have fairly argued the immortality of the soul out of the world.” The reader, it is hoped, will excuse the lengthening out this note by the following passage, which is to be found in the same essay on the immortality of the soul; and which clearly determines the point, which Hume wishes to establish.—“There arise indeed (says he) in some minds some unaccountable terrors with regard to futurity; but these would quickly vanish, were they not artificially fostered by precept and education. And those who foster them—what is their motive?—Only to gain a livelihood, and to acquire power and riches in this world. Their very zeal and industry therefore is an argument against them.” In what a woful dilemma does Hume place the christian priest? How is he to extricate himself? Is he indolent and unactive in his profession? he justly meets with as little favour from the rest of the world, as from Hume. Is he industrious and zealous? it is brought as an argument against him. Surely the powers of language must be very fascinating to endure but for a moment such egregious absurdity! yet still his writings do fascinate; because exactly calculated to meet the understandings, as well as the inclinations and passions of men of thoughtless and immoral characters. Having wrote so much against the principles

and .

“ To scorn to share a blessing with the crowd.—YOUNG, Night V.

“ I will not choose what many men desire,

“ Because I will not jump with common spirits,

“ And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.”

SHAKESPEARE, Merchant of Venice.

Hume prefaces his subject with the highest encomium on “ Philosophy,” as a sovereign antidote against “ Superstition and false Religion.”—“ Superstition alone (says he) teaches us to avoid suicide.” Now it is generally thought, that the whole tenour of the Christian religion does the same: it should seem then, that superstition and false religion are but other words with our author for “ Christianity ;”—why then not speak out at once? But however this be, and whatever deference may be due to the pursuits of philosophical inquiry into moral obligations, yet it may be truly asserted, that mere human philosophy, when applied to religious subjects, is as often given to puzzle and confound, as to explain and illustrate. Mere philosophy is willing to allow little or nothing, but what it can clearly deduce by a chain of arguments drawn from its own abstract powers of reasoning; which being shallow, especially when exerted on divine subjects, on things “ above” (though not contrary to) reason, philosophy may easily reject what is true, and admit what is false. The various and contradictory sentiments of the sages of antiquity are sufficient proofs of the weakness of human reason, when it soars above its earthly ken. Besides, philosophy is so fond of general theorems, and so determined to make every thing coincide with them, that it would rather admit any [E] consequence than give

and foundation of all religion, natural and revealed, there seemed no necessity for Hume to have been at the trouble of putting together a distinct essay in favour of suicide. One concluding dash of his pen would have done the business; and more justly from his own premises, than any thing else he has said on that subject. “ Since it appears (might he have said) from what has been advanced in my writings, “ that religion is nothing, that futurity is nothing; nothing can be advanced against the lawfulness “ of suicide; and men have nothing to do but to kill themselves whenever they think proper.”

“ And as to Hume (said Johnson),—a man, who has so much conceit as to tell all mankind, that they have been bubbled for ages, and HE is the wise man, who sees better than they;—a man, who has so little scrupulosity, as to venture to oppose those principles, which have been thought necessary to human happiness—is he to be surprised, if another man (meaning Dr. Beattie) comes and laughs at him?”—BOSWELL’S Tour to the Hebrides, p. 21.

[E] Nescio quomodo isti philosophi quidvis malle videntur quàm se non ineptos.—TULL. de Div. II. 57.

up a favourite and established maxim. Wherefore the deductions of abstract philosophy, when mixed with religious speculations, may grossly deceive us; witness the philosophising Christians of the first ages, who so much corrupted the purity of their faith by a mixture of worldly wisdom. A man need not be a philosopher to understand his moral duty, but he must be a pretender to it to become sceptical and disbelieving. Plain good sense and experience is a better foundation for good practice than subtil and abstruse reasoning, which is apt to deal more in logical and metaphysical distinctions than in real differences, and to refine away the substance in order [F] to establish the shadow. “ But
 “ it will here be superfluous (says Hume) to magnify the merits of philosophy,
 “ by displaying the pernicious tendency of that gross superstition, of which it
 “ cures the human mind. “ The superstitious man (says Tully) is miserable
 “ in every scene, in every incident of his life; even sleep itself, which banishes
 “ all other cares of unhappy mortals, affords to him matter of new terror;
 “ whilst he examines his dreams, and finds in those visions of the night pro-
 “ gnostications of future calamities.” I may add (continues Hume) that though
 “ death alone can put a full period to his misery, he dares not fly to this refuge,
 “ but still prolongs a miserable existence from a vain fear, lest he offend his
 “ maker, by using the power with which that benevolent Being has endowed
 “ him. The presents of God and nature are ravished from us by this cruel
 “ enemy (superstition); and notwithstanding that one step would remove us
 “ from the regions of pain and sorrow, her menaces still chain us down to an
 “ hated being, which she herself chiefly contributes to render miserable.”—

Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum —

is then the opinion of Lucretius and Hume.

This passage has been quoted at length to show, how fain our essayist would draw in Tully to adopt his own confused use of the term superstition. Whoever will take the trouble of consulting the passage itself [G] will find the Roman philosopher treating of that superstitious fear, which arises from a belief
 in

[F] Nescio quomodo nihil tam absurde dici potest, quod non dicatur ab aliquo philosophorum.—
 TULL. de Div. II. 58.

[G] The passage is as follows. Nam ut verè loquamur, superstitio fusa per gentes oppressit omnium ferè animos atque hominum imbecillitatem occupavit. Multum ergo et nobismetipsis et nostris pro-
 futuri.

in auguries, omens, oracles, and dreams; to which the British sage would annex, as perfectly similar, the fear and dread of dying by one's own hand, which preserves us from suicide. Let those who can, see any coincidence of circumstances; whilst it may be sufficient at present to point out and recommend to the very serious consideration of Hume's admirers, a part of this very passage, which our philosopher himself has either carelessly or wittingly omitted:—"but beware (says Tully), for I would have particular attention paid to this circumstance, beware, lest in plucking up superstition, you injure the root [H] of religion also."

Hume goes on to observe, "that if the unreasonable care of friends deprive an intended suicide of that species of death, which he proposed to himself," "he

futuri videbamus, si eam funditus sustuliffemus. Nec verò (id enim diligenter intelligi volo) superstitione tollendâ religio tollatur. Quamobrem ut religio propaganda etiam est, quæ est juncta cum cognitione naturæ, sic superstitionis stirpes omnes ejiciendæ: instat enim et urget, et quo te cunque verteris, persequitur; sive tu vatem, sive tu omen audieris; sive immolaris, sive avem aspexeris; si fulserit, si tonuerit; ut nunquam liceat quietâ mente consistere. Perfugium videtur omnium laborum et sollicitudinum esse somnus; at ex eo ipso plurimæ curæ metusque nascuntur. DE DIV. L. II.

[H] It is the artifice of modern infidels to fight under a masked battery; and secretly to sap and undermine, what they profess with their lips (and seemingly in their writings) to believe. Had Hume been fair and candid, he would rather have quoted at once Lucretius than Tully on this occasion; since the former wrote lines more exactly to his purpose, but more openly confessed.

Humana ante oculos fœde cum vita jaceret
In terris oppressa "gravi sub religione;"
Quæ caput a cæli regionibus ostendebat
Horribili super aspectu mortalibus instans.

Quare religio pedibus subiecta vicissim
Obteritur, nos exæquat victoria cælo.

Nam simul ac "ratio * tua" cœpit vociferari,
Naturam rerum haud divinâ mente coortam,
Diffugiunt animi terrores, &c.

Et metus illè foras præceps Acheruntis agendus
Funditus, humanam qui vitam turbat ab imo,
Omnia suffundens mortis nigrore, neque ullam
Essè voluptatem liquidam puramque relinquit.

* The Philosophy of Epicurus or Hume.

“ he seldom ventures on any other, or can summon up so much resolution a
 “ second time, as to execute his bloody purpose. So great is our horror of
 “ death, that when it presents itself under any form, beside that to which a
 “ man has endeavoured to reconcile his imagination, it acquires new terrors,
 “ and overcomes his feeble courage. But when the menaces of superstition are
 “ joined to this natural timidity, no wonder it quite deprives men of all power
 “ over their lives, since even many pleasures and enjoyments to which we are
 “ carried by a strong propensity, are torn from us by this inhuman tyrant.”—
 The word superstition rather than religion is as artfully introduced here to
 create ambiguity and prejudice, as it has been all along. Many will accede with
 Hume to the mischiefs of the one, who would respect the mention of the other ;
 but who may not perhaps have immediately noticed, that with Hume they
 seem perfectly synonymous. But it were to be wished, that this philosopher had
 named a few of those strong propensities from which we are torn by this inhu-
 man tyrant, that we might have judged with more accuracy of their tendency
 to promote or destroy social happiness.—Though we readily allow, that there
 exists, what may be called, a professional mode of suicide, or a readiness to destroy
 ourselves in this or that particular manner, according to our station or situa-
 tion in life ; yet this can be only asserted of the more deliberate self-assassin ;
 since when the self-murder proceeds from a sudden transport of rage, from deep
 remorse, or the horrors of impending punishment, relief is sought by the ex-
 tinction of life in any shape ; and the first method that presents [1] itself is
 eagerly embraced. But this indifference, and easy avoidance of the fatal stroke,
 forms a presumption no ways favourable to our writer’s wishes ; since it seems
 to prove, that the attempter of suicide is not so perfectly convinced of the pro-
 priety of what he is about, but that a trifle will avert him from his purpose.—

Are not these exactly the sentiments of modern infidels, if they would speak out ? But Lucretius
 is more fair and open than Hume, when he declares, that he hopes to get praise in discovering these
 things to his “ superstitious” countrymen .

Primum quod magnis doceo de rebus, et artis
 Religionum animos nodis exsolvere pergo.

Lucretius de Naturâ Rerum, Lib. I. & III.

[1] See more of professional modes of suicide in Part V. C. v.

“ Let us endeavour then (continues Hume) to restore men to their native [κ] liberty, by showing that suicide may be free from every imputation of blame or guilt, according to the sentiments of all the ancient philosophers.” —A glorious liberty truly, to which he would kindly vindicate us, whose very principle consists in our destruction!—and unwarrantable is the licence he has taken with the names of all the ancient philosophers, since it has been shown in preceding parts of this work, that Pythagoras and Socrates totally disallowed the practice of suicide; that Aristotle considered it as an high crime against the state; that Plato made laws against it (though he enlarged the bounds of its innocent commission); and that the Stoics themselves only allowed it an honourable report, when practised on some important or dignified occasions. Surely then a man of candour would have qualified his term of “ all” ancient philosophers, which, as it now stands, tends only to mislead by a bold and false assertion.— Having made these few remarks on his preparatory observations, we are happy to agree with our essayist in his next sentence; “ that if suicide be a crime, it must be so either against God, society, or self.” In this division of the subject we will join, having indeed adopted it already in the course of this inquiry, though for the purpose of framing a very opposite conclusion to Hume’s. His proofs, “ that suicide is no transgression of our duty to God,” shall first be considered.

“ The Providence of the Deity (says Hume) appears not immediately in any operation, but governs every thing by those general and immutable laws, which have been established from the beginning.”—Though this bold assertion is by no means to be allowed as universally true, yet for the present be it granted in the utmost latitude that our author wishes; viz. “ that the Deity never interferes by a particular act of his Providence partially to set aside his general laws”—and let us deduce the consequence. Now what are these general laws (as far as the present inquiry is concerned in them) with respect to animals rational or irrational, but certain instinctive principles impressed on their natures, by the impulses of which they are taught to fulfill the purposes of their crea-

[κ] Hume might use the language of Horace here :

Quisquis ——— tristique superstitione
Aut alio mentis morbo calet; huc propius me
Dum doceo insanire omnes, vos ordine adite. SAT. II. 3.

tion?—and what law of nature is more universal, or forcible, or immutable, through all ranks and degrees of animal life, than the principle of self-preservation? Does it not uniformly pervade all animal existence from the dullest oyster, which resists with all its might the murdering knife, to (one had almost said) the acuteſt philoſopher? But “no (would an Hume reply); the true philoſopher has extricated himſelf by the force of reaſon out of the trammels of “ ſuperſtition, and therefore knows no offence in ſuicide”:—that is, he thinks himſelf at liberty to counteract one of the moſt univerſal and immutable laws or principles, by which God governs the world and regulates the actions of men, —the law of “ ſelf-preservation.” But if the Deity (as Hume aſſerts) never ſets aſide his own general laws, how then ſhall man preſume to do it without offence?

“ Every event (Hume proceeds) is alike important in the eyes of that infinite “ Being, who takes in at every glance the moſt diſtant regions of ſpace, and “ the remoteſt periods of time. There is no event, however important to us, “ which He has exempted from the general laws that govern the univerſe, or “ which He has peculiarly reſerved for his own immediate action and operation. “ The revolution of ſtates and empires depends upon the ſmalleſt caprice or “ paſſion of ſingle men; and the lives of men are ſhortened or extended by the “ ſmalleſt accident of air or diet, ſun-ſhine or tempeſt. Nature ſtill continues “ her progreſs and operation; and if general laws be ever broken by particular “ volitions of the Deity, it is after a manner, which entirely eſcapes human ob- “ ſervation.”—There is great artifice and ſophiſtry in the introduction of this propoſition—“ that all events are alike important in the eyes of God.”—At leaſt it is capable of ſeveral interpretations, and therefore ſome explanation is neceſſary. For it may imply the Epicurean notion, that the ſupreme Being regards not what paſſes in the world, where all things are “ alike” important to Him, that is of no importance at all in his ſight;—He cares not for them. In this ſenſe the truth of it is not to be granted. Or it may mean, that the Deity, abſolute in his own perfection, cannot be affected in any ſhape by the events of this world; they are all “ alike” important to Him, that is equally unavailing to add to, or detract from, the perfection of his nature. This is certainly true. But any inſinuation from thence, that He therefore regards not the actions of men, muſt be ſtrongly oppoſed: ſince condeſcending to uſe ſuch terms as ſuit

our finite capacities, He is frequently pleased to declare, how much He is honoured or dishonoured by the actions of men. But the sense in which it seems Hume meant that we should understand it is, “that there is no event important enough to incline the Deity to break through the general laws He has appointed for the management of the universe, by the interposition of any special [L] Providence.”—This idea deserves confutation, but is not meant to be combated in this place. For allowing it all the force the essayist wishes, what is the fair conclusion?—why the same as before;—that if the state of an empire cannot be deemed a sufficient reason to influence the Deity sometimes to interpose, and by some special act of his Providence to interrupt some general law of nature, how can the paltry concerns of an individual, however miserable he may feel himself, be deemed a sufficient cause for that individual to alter or encroach upon the general and immutable principle so instinctively and earnestly recommending self-preservation? Further; if the God of nature never interrupts the course of his general laws, except it be (as Hume asserts) in some secret manner, so as to leave it unknown to us, surely the suicide’s guilt is aggravated, bold and daring, who breaks through these general laws openly and avowedly in the face of God and man.

“Men may employ (says he) every faculty with which they are endowed, in order to provide for their ease, happiness, and preservation.”—The addition of the last word was rather unfortunate, because we must immediately subjoin, but not for their destruction. Nor indeed are they to consult their own ease

[L.] The solemn Juvenal remarks, (Sat. 13.)

Sunt in fortunæ qui casibus omnia ponant,
Et nullo credant mundum rectore moveri,
Naturâ volvente vices et lucis et anni;
Atque ideo intrepidi quæcunque altaria tangunt.

The gay Horace openly laughs and says, (Sat. L. I. 5.)

— Credat Judæus Apella,
Non ego; namque Deos didici securum agere ævum;
Nec si quid miri faciat natura, Deos id.
Tristes ex alto cæli demittere tecto.

While the insidious Hume, imitating the gravity of the former satirist, insinuates the light principles of the latter; and whilst affecting to point out and believe a Providence, is undermining its interference; and thereby works infinite mischief.

and

and happiness any further than is consistent with social connexions and duties ; which may sometimes perhaps be contrary to their own ease and happiness, and even to the preservation of life itself : as in the necessary hazards of war, and in other occupations for the good of the whole ; the reason of which has been often repeated. Besides ; the idea of happiness should be extended to “ both worlds ;” a matter that seldom occurs to Hume or to the suicide, who is not given to calculate the difference between present and future joys or sufferings :—

“ Eternity ne’er steals one thought between.”

“ Putting together therefore (says he) these conclusions, we find that human life depends upon the general laws of matter and motion ; and that it is no encroachment on the office of Providence to disturb or alter these general laws ;—has not every one of consequence the free disposal of his own life ?” In the first place ; his first conclusion, by counteracting his second, utterly destroys instead of establishes his general consequence. For if human life depend upon, and be solely subject to, the general laws of matter and motion, then certainly it must be deemed “ an encroachment” on the office of Providence, which established those laws, to attempt interrupting their general course ; and consequently an offence to accelerate death by the commission of suicide. So much for the conjunction of his two conclusions, as they affect each other. Let us now take a view of them separately and see how they tend to establish his consequence. Human life indeed is and ever must be subject in general to the laws of matter and motion. This it cannot help, when the objects that affect it are external and violent. But how does it follow, that it is subject, without imputation of guilt in the aggressor, to the voluntary violence of its own possessor ? A man cannot prevent his dissolution in the former case, he seeks his own destruction in the latter. In one instance he is the sufferer alone, in the other both agent and sufferer ; and therefore the situations are by no means parallel, or to be blended together. If I am robbed of my property, I lose it ; if I squander it away, I lose it also ; but in the former case I am entitled to compassion, in the latter I deserve censure. As to the second proposition, there is no reason to allow, that it is no encroachment on the office of divine Providence to disturb and alter these general laws, to which our author has such frequent recourse ; particularly that which respects the great principle of

of self-preservation with which we are concerned. He says himself in another place,—“it is a kind of blasphemy to imagine, that any created being “can” “disturb the order of the world, or invade the business of Providence.” How does he think then of strengthening his consequence by adding that which he says, it is downright blasphemy to suppose possible? Since therefore both his propositions taken apart are so objectionable, as to the consequence he would deduce from them, may it not be affirmed, that they become doubly so, when united to form a conclusion, which they neither separately nor jointly tend to establish? But he proceeds to a sort of explanation of what he means by disturbing and altering these general laws, which he bandies about at pleasure. “If it were an encroachment (says he) on the Almighty’s right for men to dispose “of their own lives, it would be equally criminal to act for the preservation of “life, as for its destruction. If I turn aside a stone that is falling on my head, “I disturb the course of nature, and I invade the peculiar province of the “Almighty, by lengthening out my life beyond the period, which by the “general laws of matter and motion He had assigned it.” A philosopher like Hume should not only have known (as he must have done) but have acknowledged a distinction between the general laws and powers of matter and motion, and the particular movements of an individual body. The former were originally communicated and impressed by the Deity himself, and neither are nor can be altered by the powers of man; the latter, where they are within the compass of man’s agency, depend on his free-will for their direction; which will naturally inclining a man to self-preservation, he uses it freely “to turn aside the impending stone,” without disturbing the general laws of nature, or invading any peculiar province of the Almighty; on the contrary only using those powers, which the Deity has implanted in him for the purposes of self-preservation.—With which answer it is time to take our leave of these general laws of matter and motion, which sometimes (according to the above writer) it is permitted a man to resist without offence, and sometimes not; which sometimes he has the power of counteracting, and sometimes he has not; which in short have been bandied backwards and forwards with no other view but to suit the purposes of ambiguous sophistry, and to entangle the plainest deductions of truth and common sense in the trammels of metaphysical subtilty.

“Are

“ Are we to suppose (Hume goes on) that the life of man is of such importance, as that the Deity has preserved it to his sole disposal? But the life of man is of no greater importance to the universe than the life of an oyster.” —What is useful in its generation is important to that part of the universe with which it is connected; and a philosopher and an oyster have each their respective stations. The oyster fulfils the law of his existence (whatever it be) as long as he lives, and at length dies (though not through suicide) for the nourishment of the philosopher. The philosopher leads a life of learned ease, which he employs in ingeniously arguing (or attempting to argue) away the first instinctive principles of nature, reason, faith, religion. It is by no means impossible therefore but that the oyster may at last prove the more important animal of the two, by having been “ more useful” and “ less mischievous” in his generation than the philosopher; which is not only acceding to Hume’s argument of equality, but going beyond it.

“ A hair, a fly, an insect (he says) is able to destroy this mighty being, whose life is of such importance. Is it an absurdity to suppose, that human prudence may lawfully dispose of what depends on such insignificant causes?” —The one is done “ against” our will, the other “ with” it; and therefore nothing can be made of this kind of argument, because it returns to the original question (without any decision) on the lawfulness of suicide. “ Pretty” as the allusion may be thought by some, which he uses here,—“ it would be no crime in me to divert the Nile or Danube from its course, if I could—where then is the crime of turning a few ounces of blood out of their natural channel?” —yet what a contempt does he show for the understanding of his reader by such wretched trifling!

“ Do you imagine (says Hume again) that I repine at Providence or curse my creation, because I put a period to my life? I thank God for the good I have already enjoyed, and for the power with which I am endowed of escaping the ill that threatens me. To you it belongs to repine at Providence, who foolishly imagine you have no such power; and who must still prolong an hated life, though loaded with pain and sickness, with shame [M] and poverty.”

[M] Whoever thinks it worth while to peruse the third book of Lucretius, will find from whence the English philosopher has stolen this curious argument (for he cannot claim the honour of invention) and.

"verity."—Here he retorts our own arguments upon us, and charges us with folly, if not guilt, in enduring pain and misery. But the case seems briefly this. Would he be deemed the more obedient subject or servant of an earthly prince or master, who, thanking his lord for all former kindness, should refuse to submit any longer to his authority; or he, who should patiently endure to the end all that was imposed on him? It is imagined that Hume can have but few abettors in this extraordinary assertion—"that suicide expresses a resignation to the divine will, or that a patient endurance of misery and affliction is a proof of our repining at the ways of Providence."

Again he says;—"do you not teach, that when an ill befalls me, though by the malice of my enemies, I ought to be resigned to Providence, and that the actions of men are the operations of the Almighty, as much as the actions of inanimate beings? When I fall on my own sword therefore, I receive my death equally from the hands of the Deity, as if it had proceeded from a lion, a precipice, or a fever. The submission you require excludes not human skill and industry, if possibly by their means I can avoid or escape the calamity. And why may I not employ one remedy as well as another?"—We do wish to teach, that patience and resignation are amiable and becoming virtues; and we do therefore conclude, that suicide, which implies their failure, is proportionably criminal. We do teach, that no action of man could be performed without the sufferance of the Deity; but then we make a wide distinction between what He only "permits," and what He "approves." The Almighty has given us free-will for the purposes of moral agency, and were He

and likewise many others as curious, which he has dispersed through his metaphysical writings. The poet shows, how men under the influence of religion are ready to suffer pain and trouble, &c. with patience—"but how foolish (says he) is it to do so! All our sufferings under the evils of life arise from our "fear of death." We fear death, as children do the dark, but without reason." The poet's allusions and illustrations to prove the soul a part of the body, and that it dies with it, are very artful and full of poetic imagery, but have about the same degree of argument in them, as Hume's "Nile and few ounces of blood." But the Roman poet has certainly the advantage over the English philosopher in point of avowed principles, ingenuoufness and candour. The poet was an Heathen (living before the promulgation of Christianity), an Epicurean, and an open defender of Atheism. The philosopher had all the advantages of divine revelation to improve his natural reason, had he chosen to have embraced them, was a nominal Christian, but an infidel in disguise, broaching in various shapes and forms many principles of rank Epicurism.

to interpose at all times for the prevention of evil, for the hinderance of the malice of our enemies, wherein would the free-will of man consist? But that God is the immediate and positive author or approver of evil, is a doctrine never to be allowed. In resisting evil then by all means in our power (among which means however we do not include suicide) we resist not God; but, acting in obedience to his law of self-preservation, we resist such created matter animate or inanimate, as happens to oppose our ease and happiness, and perhaps to endanger life itself. For this reason we avoid, where we can, “the lion in the way, we shrink back from the precipice, and counteract the fever’s burning rage.” But when we fly to the sword or pistol for the purpose of suicide, the case of our suffering death is as much altered, as a distinction between what is voluntary and involuntary can make it: but this is a distinction with which our author seldom cares to meddle. One remedy with him is the same as another, the poison that procures death or the antidote that prevents it.

“If my life be not my own (he continues) it were criminal in me to put it in danger, as well as to dispose of it; nor could one man deserve the appellation of hero, whom glory or friendship transports into the greatest dangers, and another merit the reproach of wretch or miscreant, who puts a period to his life from the same or like motives.”—The life of man is certainly his own, that is; it is not his neighbour’s, or at his neighbour’s disposal. But it is not his own, if thereby be meant an exclusion of all property of his Creator in it or over it. Further, when a man becomes a member of society and lives under government, his life is from thenceforward only partially his own. He has then many connexions and duties to fulfil for the civil advantages he receives. The good of the whole community is to take place of the good of the individual. Self-preservation must give way to a more enlarged notion of self, as blended with others; and therefore we may innocently hazard our lives for the benefit of our country or friends in a variety of shapes; and as to “endanger” our own lives for the advantage of others is contrary to the general selfishness of the suicide in that his last act, and is more disinterested than most other principles of conduct, so it is above all meritorious and deserving praise of the community.

“There is no being, which possesses any power or faculty, that it receives not from its Creator, nor is there any one (says Hume) which by ever so
VOL. II. I “irregular

“irregular an action can encroach upon the plan of his Providence or disorder the universe.”—God forbid it should be in the power of every miserable suicide to disorder the universe! If it were so, we must soon expect wild work from so increasing an evil. But allowing what he says here, the practice of suicide can claim no other exemption from guilt on this account than must be allowed to every species of crimes whatever. A prince’s army may not be affected or hurt by the desertion of a few private soldiers; but are those soldiers therefore “at liberty” to desert, whenever the service becomes painful to them, or will they not be punished for so doing? A man caught in “attempting” theft or murder is equally guilty and deserving of punishment, though his designs are frustrated and nothing is put out of order, as if he had accomplished all his schemes and raised a confusion. The subjects of a kingdom may offend against its laws and prove refractory and rebellious, and consequently be liable to the just displeasure of their prince, without being able to disturb the good order of his government, or to limit the exercise of his just prerogative: it is very possible to be both weak and wicked. With respect to God it is readily to be acknowledged, that we can do nothing by which we can really disturb the laws of his Providence; but since He has been pleased to give us many rules of conduct, we may certainly “offend” Him by acting contrary to these. The question then returns (without any solution from Hume’s present argument) to its original state, concerning the propriety or lawfulness of suicide. We received all our powers and faculties from God, and we employ them in every thing we do; but having freedom of will we employ them sometimes innocently and laudably, and many times otherwise.

Hume proceeds; “it is impious, says the old Roman [N] superstition, to divert rivers from their course, or to invade the prerogatives of nature: it is impious, says the French superstition, to inoculate for the small-pox, or to usurp the business of Providence by voluntarily producing distempers and maladies: it is impious, says the modern European superstition,—(“otherwise the christian religion”) to put a period to our own lives, and thereby to rebel against our Creator;—and why not impious, say I, to build houses, cultivate the ground, or sail upon the ocean? In all these actions we employ our powers of mind and body to produce some innovation in the course of na-

[N] See debates on diverting the course of the Tiber, Tac. An. I.

“ture;

“ ture; and in none of them do we any more. They are all of them there—
 “ fore equally innocent or equally criminal.”—Hume has here brought together
 a curious assortment of different superstitions for the purpose of mingling,
 confounding, and rendering ambiguous. Such a passage as this, which puts
 all alterations or innovations of every kind, be they good, bad, or indifferent,
 upon the same level, scarcely deserves a serious refutation: we shall only there-
 fore refer to that freedom of will and variety of opinion, which ever has en-
 gaged the attention and ever will influence the actions of mankind.

With respect to the common allusion of the sentinel on duty Hume asks—
 “ why do you conclude, that Providence has placed me in this station. For
 “ my part I find, that I owe my birth to a long chain of causes, of which many
 “ depended upon the voluntary actions of men. But (say you my opposers)
 “ Providence guided all these causes, and nothing happens in the universe
 “ without its consent and co-operation. If so; then neither does my death,
 “ however voluntary, happen without its consent; and whenever pain or for-
 “ row so far overcome my patience, as to make me tired of life, I may con-
 “ clude, that I am recalled from my station in the clearest and most express
 “ terms. It is Providence [o] surely that has placed me at this present mo-
 “ ment in this chamber; but may I not leave it when I think proper, without
 “ being liable to the imputation of having deserted my post or station?”—
 The post or station appointed by the Almighty is “ Life.” Life then is the
 post we are bound to defend, and not thus wretchedly to quibble about living
 in this or that room. It is further to be observed, that whenever the desertion
 of the post is mentioned by the oppugners of suicide, it is used not so much as
 an argument, as an illustration of our dependent state—“ like soldiers on their
 commander;” and in this view we must still conceive it to be (as has been ob-
 served in other places) a very apt and significant allusion. We have already

[o] This quibbling, wretched as it is, is also used by St. Prieux in Rousseau’s *Novelle Eloise*,
 C. cxiv. and therefore Hume has not the credit of inventing it. “ You who argue thus (about God’s
 “ having “stationed” us in this world)—has he not stationed you in the town where you were
 “ born?—why therefore do you quit it without his leave?”

Indeed almost every argument that Hume attempts is only a repetition either of what is to be found
 in St. Prieux’s Letter above, or in the *Persian Letters* of Montesquieu; both which will be noticed
 hereafter.

noticed the distinction between such actions, as have God for their immediate author, and such as happen through his present of free-will to mankind; and consequently God's "suffering" us to destroy ourselves is in no shape equivalent to his approbation of the deed: the words "consent and co-operation" are happily ambiguous and fallacious, as Hume here uses them. If pain and misery are the orders, and passports, and discharges from the duties of our station, our service must needs be a very pleasant one; as we are at liberty to quit it, whenever it becomes irksome. But since experience proves our station to be dependent and a kind of military service or warfare, it points out also, that the hour of danger and difficulty is the very last, in which we can think of quitting our post, with the least degree of credit and honour to ourselves. We are ever ready to acknowledge, that we owe our existence to a wonderful chain of causes and effects, in which the Deity however was the "first" mover; and so far every particular individual's existence is resolvable into the original will and pleasure of the Almighty. But God having once established general laws for the continuance of man's existence, the particular execution of those laws was left to the free agency of man himself; and therefore human life depends "secondarily" on the voluntary actions of human creatures, both as to its origin and preservation in many shapes. But as we in no wise contributed either primarily or secondarily to our own existence, so we have as little authority either derived, or acquired, or absolutely given, to quit that existence at pleasure. If our progenitors, as secondary causes, possessed no such power in themselves, they could not communicate it to their descendants; and if they could not acquire it, neither can their posterity. But if this power has been absolutely given to us by the Deity, as the "first" cause of our existence, it is highly incumbent on the favourers of suicide clearly to evince, how it was bestowed upon us. If they say with Hume—"the general laws, by which God governs the world, are not affected one way or the other by the death of an individual; the universe continues the same, whether I am in my chamber or in my grave; and therefore I am at liberty to make a change important to myself, but insignificant to the world; and such a change appears not only permitted, but even pointed out by the Almighty, by the "power" he has given me over my own life, whenever pain and sorrow have so far overcome my patience, as to make me tired of life:"—this may be the language of a few abstract philosophers, who being fond of metaphysical subtilties are afraid of

of being governed by what they deem superstition, or by any common and vulgar opinions; but who—forgetting that we have the “same power” of putting an end to the lives of others as to our own; when they plead that power, as a leave and passport, become the patrons and promoters of common, as well as of self-murder. But these assertions of theirs are founded in sophistry and void of all proof, as has been shown at large. Let us hear rather, what is the language of nature (speaking through the instinctive propensities of all animal creation) in opposition to the opinion, that such a liberty of self-destruction has been given us by the Deity. “The love of life, the urgency of self-preservation is so powerful within us, that it seems among the first instincts or principles implanted by nature and nature’s God; so that we cannot maliciously offend against it, without offending against God, thus plainly instructing us through the force of these impressions.”—The favourers of suicide therefore must make out some clearer passports for our launching into eternity, whenever we please, without offence to God, than they have hitherto been able to do by a few abstract and ambiguous deductions from the laws of matter and motion, and from the insignificance of an individual’s existence with respect to the universe; which seems the sum and substance of all that even the ingenuity of an Hume can advance on the subject. For the above are all his positions respecting the innocence of suicide, as it relates to our Maker; which, had they not been proposed by so distinguished a writer, and couched under such an engaging and fascinating style, would at once have met with their merited contempt and oblivion. It must also be remarked, that Hume dwells much longer [P] on this part of his subject than on what concerns the offence against society and self put together. Now these latter offences being more palpable and level to common understandings, he would have found more difficulty in even attempting to disprove them at large; whereas the former (its offence against God), lying more concealed from vulgar apprehension, is more capable of being obscured by the mists of metaphysical exhalations. The real offence committed by the suicide against God, as his natural and moral governor, has been shown at large in our observations on that head [Q]; and therefore we are now at

[P] He spends seventeen pages in his introduction and proofs of its innocence in respect to God;—little more than two, as it regards society;—and only one, as it concerns self: whilst how it may affect the Christian, he only thinks worthy of a note.

[Q] In Part II. Chap. ii.

liberty to proceed to what Hume advances on its innocence with respect to society.

“ A man, (as Hume asserts) who retires from life, does no harm to society; “ he only ceases to do good; which, if it be an injury, is of the lowest kind.”—Mark the softness of the expression; the self-murderer “ retires from life”—as a man is said to retire from company, from business, to enjoy a little repose and quiet. What is the difference?—only that the company, the business may be resumed at pleasure, but life [R] is gone for ever. Besides, how is it to be allowed “ that ceasing to do good is doing no harm?” It is a mild way of censuring a criminal’s conduct to say of him, “ he has ceased to do good;” but how it follows from thence by necessary consequence, that he has done no positive harm, can only be found in Hume’s system of logic. It must totally depend on the station a man quits to determine, how little harm he does by leaving it. A negative kind of state, which does not interest itself at all in action, is often highly culpable; consequently by our voluntary assumption of this state, this “ ceasing to do good by retiring from life;” we may actually do the greatest harm; and this it would be trifling away time to deem wanting a proof. The various shapes, in which we do actual harm to society by self-murder, have been abundantly exemplified in some preceding [s] chapters.

“ All our obligations to do good to society seem (as Hume proceeds) to imply “ something reciprocal. I receive the benefit of society and therefore ought to “ promote its interests; but when I withdraw myself altogether [T], can I be “ bound any longer?”—We entirely agree to this idea of reciprocation; and the clear deduction or consequence is, that a man is as little at liberty to leave society without its permission, as society is suddenly and without cause to withdraw its protection from him. The latter would be a gross violation of common justice even in the suicide’s own opinion; then why not the former? The obligations being truly reciprocal are not to be violated on either side.

[R] ————— facilis descensus Averni:

Sed revocare gradum, &c.———VIRG.

[s] See Part II. Chap. iii. and iv.

[T] See this objection stated and answered, though in a somewhat different shape in Part II. C. iii.

“ But

“ But allowing (as he goes on) our obligations to society perpetual ; I am
 “ not bound to do a small good to society at the expence of a great harm to
 “ myself ; why then should I prolong a miserable existence, because of some
 “ frivolous advantage, which the public may perhaps receive from me ?”—The
 reciprocal obligations of individuals and society, and particularly such as respect
 our nearest connexions, are never to be overlooked. A man thinks himself the
 best judge of what proportion of good he expects from social intercourse or
 private regards. Let him therefore leave it to society, friends, and relatives
 to judge of the pleasure and advantage they look for in him. He is bound in
 common justice to “ consult” these before “ he retires from life ;” and unless he
 gains their permission, he certainly and highly offends by deserting their inte-
 rests. It is too much in determining our own cause to assume the various offices
 of accuser, witness, judge, and executioner.

“ If upon account of age and infirmities (says Hume) I may lawfully resign
 “ any office or employment and spend my time altogether in fencing against
 “ the calamities, and alleviating, as much as possible, the miseries of my future
 “ life, why may I not cut short these miseries at once by an action which is no
 “ more prejudicial to society ?”—In resigning an office we act fairly and openly,
 and have that permission of the public, for which we argued above. But does
 a resignation of a public employment imply at the same time a cessation of all
 private and domestic obligations ? There may be duties annexed to such con-
 nexions, which we can never resign, but with our latest breath, and that breath
 preserved as long as the course of nature will permit, instead of being curtailed
 by our own voluntary action.—“ But (as he urges further) suppose that I am
 “ a burden to society, in such a case my resignation of life must not only be
 “ innocent, but laudable.”—There are few persons humble enough to deem
 themselves encumbrances to society. When they commit suicide, it is seldom
 through any public spirit, or because they are unwilling to be a burden to
 others, but because they feel burdensome to themselves : the good of society is
 least in all their thoughts. Neither is it always (as Hume asserts) “ that they,
 “ who have health and wealth and power, are in good humour with the world ;”
 since in the midst of these remorse and the stings of conscience are sometimes
 known to stimulate to suicide ; and sometimes also an unaccountable weariness
 of life even in the midst of all its apparent enjoyments.—“ A man (says he)

“ may fly by suicide from the ignominy of that public punishment, to which
 “ he has been justly condemned by the offended laws ; and his voluntary death
 “ is equally advantageous to society by ridding it of a pernicious member.”—
 That a culprit often does thus fly from punishment is very certain ; but that
 therefore he may do so is a very false conclusion ; as it also is, that the antici-
 pation of his exemplary punishment by his self-murder is equally advantageous
 to society, as if he publicly suffered. It equally indeed rids society of a bad
 member, but it evades and sets at nought the executive power of the laws. It
 is the criterion of an honest heart to make every possible reparation for any
 offence it has committed. But an injured state can only be satisfied by the
 public punishment of the offender ; and therefore he, who flies from such pu-
 nishment (especially by a method putting it out of his power to become a better
 citizen in future) not only dies in the guilt of his previous offences, but in the
 very act of dying adds to their weight and number. He also grossly violates a
 fundamental principle of all society, by assuming that punishment into his own
 hands, which it belongs only to the public [v] magistrate to inflict. This is
 all that Hume urges to prove suicide no offence against society. But is it candid
 to deal only in such general positions ? to stick so close to the term “ society ”
 in its public and comprehensive sense alone, without a mention of more private
 and immediate connexions ? He made the same unfair use of the word “ uni-
 verse ” in the former part, without descending to man’s importance on his own
 earth. But general terms suit the purposes of ambiguity better than specific
 ones. For had he instituted an inquiry into the merits of suicide with respect
 to the narrower circle in which the self-murderer moved ; to his more confined
 and dependent connexions ; to the claims of friendship, the calls of humanity,
 the ties of consanguinity, the feelings of parental and conjugal attachment, he
 had entered on a business, in which he would have been sure of being foiled :
 since the offence of suicide in these familiar points of view is too glaring and
 enormous to be glossed over by any smoothness of language or art of sophistry.

Hume’s last page is employed in attempting to prove that suicide is no offence
 against ourselves, that is, against our own interests. His grand position here
 is as follows. “ No one can question suicide’s being consistent with interest
 “ and duty to ourselves, who allows that age, sickness, or misfortune may ren-

[v] See this argument treated in Part II. C. iii.

“ der life a burden and make it worse even than annihilation. If suicide be no
 “ crime, both prudence and courage should engage us to rid ourselves at once
 “ of existence, when it becomes a burden. It is the only way that we can then
 “ be useful to society, by setting an example, which if imitated would preserve
 “ to every one his chance for happiness in life, and would effectually free him
 “ from all danger of misery.”—We most readily allow, that infirmities and
 afflictions may render us weary of life and desirous of its termination; but we
 cannot see the necessity of the consequence, that therefore it is consistent with
 our interest and duty to despatch ourselves. We have duties to God and our
 neighbour to consult first, and also a consideration concerning our “ whole”
 happiness; into which account a wise man takes his future, as well as present,
 condition. It is true, that annihilation might be sometimes preferable to the
 dregs of life under acute pain and misery, were annihilation sure to follow.
 But what if suicide be an introduction to another life? Here rests the strength
 or weakness of the cause. For the validity of most arguments, either for or
 against suicide in extreme cases, depends on the determination of this important
 question. The manner, in which the word annihilation is here introduced by
 Hume, seems more than an insinuation of his own sentiments on this point.
 “ We may kill ourselves, because life may be a greater burden even than an-
 “ nihilation.” The choice with him lies between endurance of present misery
 or annihilation:—further comment seems needless.

Having considered the “ note” with which this essay concludes in another
 place (Part III. C. i.), it is high time to take leave of this extraordinary per-
 formance, in which nothing has been discovered, that could for a moment
 stagger our belief of the unlawfulness of suicide, even on natural and philoso-
 phical grounds; still less on christian. Indeed many of Hume’s general ad-
 mirers are said not to set much store by this essay, which they consider as one
 of his inferior performances, and which he was dissuaded from publishing
 during his life-time as intended. Perhaps this reason may be assigned for their
 indifference: because, whilst under no immediate temptation to commit suicide
 themselves, they see the weakness of all arguments in its favour; being fast
 held to life by the instinctive principle of self-preservation. Whereas from the
 general tenour of many of their lives, they may at all times wish to be per-
 suaded, that there is no superintending Providence; and they may be desirous

of arguing away all notions of the soul's immortality, and of a future state of retribution, because all these are a restraint on the pursuit of their own evil imaginations. Though there seems therefore little danger in Hume's mode of reasoning of persuading any man to think well of suicide, who lies under no temptation to commit it, yet when once a person is under the influence of some great chagrin, disappointment, or misery, and begins to "wish" suicide might be lawful, or at least not very culpable, he then catches at such a publication as this, which flowing from the pen of so fashionable a writer, and coinciding with his own present feelings, easily infuses its baneful poison into the recesses of his [x] disturbed imagination. Hence the necessity of such writings being more fully noticed on the present occasion than from their flimsy mode of reasoning they would otherwise deserve to be; in order that they may undergo just censure and reprobation.

Destructive however as are the metaphysical productions of this favourite and fashionable writer, yet the "innocence" of his private character is set up to prove, that he was a good member of the community, notwithstanding the promulgation of all his extraordinary opinions. What then? is there but one way of being a pernicious citizen? Are there not destroyers of all religious principles in theory, as well as practice? Are there not men, who love to contradict all received opinions, to puzzle and confound all things, that they may pass for beings of a superior class to the [y] generality of mankind? What! because

[x] The following anecdote was communicated to the author by a gentleman, who vouched for its truth. Hume lent his essay on suicide to a friend, who on returning it told him, it was a most excellent performance, and pleased him better than any thing he had read a long time:—and the next day he shot himself.

[y] The following extract shows, that there were infidels of different sorts very early in the world, as well as in our days.—"It is certain, that the source of all Atheism is generally a dull and earthy
 "disbelief of the existence of things beyond the reach of sense; and it cannot be denied, but that
 "there is something of immorality in the temper of all atheists, as all atheistic doctrine tends also to
 "immorality. Notwithstanding which, it must not be therefore concluded, that all dogmatic Atheists
 "came to be such, merely by means of gross intemperance, sensuality and debauchery. Plato indeed
 "describes (De Leg. Lib. X.) one sort of Atheists in this manner. "Such, who together with
 "this opinion, that all things are void of Gods, are acted also by intemperance of pleasures and
 "pains, and hurried away with violent lusts, being persons otherwise endowed with strong memories
 "and

because the ruling passion of a man's soul is literary fame, and no man can pursue this with avidity without an habitual temperance and freedom from much sensual vice, can he not therefore point out a road to others, by which they may pursue their course of profligacy without care or solicitude? Can he not broach from the retirement of his study such principles and writings, as tend to unhinge every security of virtue, and to loosen every band of social and domestic happiness? and has not the "innocent" Hume accomplished all this? Are not the effects of his metaphysical scepticism apparent in numbers, and will not its evil consequences descend to posterity?—For what can bind a man to a moral and religious behaviour; what can prevent his engaging in every excess of vicious passion, who is taught to sit loose to the shackles of what Hume insidiously terms "superstition;" and who is encouraged to fly to suicide at pleasure, "as his interest and his duty?"—Instead therefore of being deemed a "good" citizen, Hume ought to be esteemed a more pernicious and destructive member of society than even the profligate and abandoned liver; because the example of the one is partial and limited to his own life (and possibly his own evil conduct reprobated even by himself); whereas the writings of the other diffuse their deadly poison through succeeding generations. The greatest and most lasting mischief that a man of letters, who is also an admired writer, can do to the essential interests of society, is to publish an "unprincipled book [z]." In

"and quick wits."—And these are the debauched, roaring and hectoring Atheists. But besides these that philosopher tells us, that there is another sort of Atheists also, "Such, who though they think there be no Gods at all, yet notwithstanding, being naturally disposed to justice and moderation, as they will not do outrageous and exorbitant things themselves, so they will shun the conversation of wicked, debauched persons, and delight rather in the society of those that are fair and just."—These are your externally honest and civilised Atheists. Now what that thing is, which besides gross sensuality and debauchery might tempt men to entertain atheistic opinions, the same philosopher also declares, namely, "that it is an affectation of singularity, and of seeming wiser than the generality of mankind."—CUDWORTH'S Intellectual System, Vol. I. P. 176. 4to.

[z] The following account of Hume is given by Dr. Brown in his "Estimate of Manners and Principles of the Times," Vol. I. P. 54, &c. and Vol. II. P. 86. &c.

"The present age is not "deep" in the speculations of infidelity; that would imply an attention to these subjects—a certain degree of self-converse and thought not imputable to the manners of the present age. Hence the quarto volumes of a Bolingbroke, though fraught with the very marrow of infidelity, are seldom read; but the inviting shape of essays philosophical and moral (meaning Hume's)

In how great abhorrence then should those writings be held, let them come from what admired hand they will, which attempt to blend all distinctions of virtue and vice, and to undermine the foundations, of every thing serious and religious!—which attempt to argue away in specious sophistry the certainty of a future state of retribution for present actions, and to raise a doubt of the soul's immortality!

The affectation of piety and bigotry of puritanism [A] in Cromwel's days naturally led the royal party, when restored to power, into the opposite extreme of licentious and atheistical principles. Having suffered wrongfully and cruelly from the pretended "presence of the Lord," when once they were freed from the yoke of such bondage, they began to esteem the presence of God any where, or his concern at human actions, a mere bugbear and puritanical chimaera; and hence in order to get rid of superstition and bigotry, they fell an easy prey to infidelity and practical atheism. But neither could this extreme last

come within the compass of a breakfast-reading, or amuse the man of fashion, whilst under the discipline of the curling tongs. A certain historian of our own times, bent upon popularity and gain, published a large volume of history, and omitted no opportunity that offered to disgrace religion. A large impression was published, and a small part sold ("only forty copies the first year, as some life of Hume says").—The author, being asked, why he had so larded his work with irreligion, his answer implied, "He had done it to make it sell." It was whispered to him, that he had totally mistaken the spirit of the times; that no allurements could engage the fashionable infidel-world to travel through a large quarto; and that the few readers of quarto that yet remain are mostly among the serious part of mankind; and therefore he had offended his best customers and ruined the sale of his book. This information had a notable effect; for a second volume, as large and instructive as the first appeared:—not a smack of irreligion is to be found in it, and an apology for the first concludes the whole.—When he ordered his agent to expunge exceptionable passages, he said it was, "that he would not offend the godly."—Now this man in defiance of decency has since carried on the trade of essay-making, in which he has not only misrepresented, abused, and insulted, the most essential principles of christianity, but indeed of all religion. In these sorry essays he had no fear of offending the godly, because he knew the godly would not be his purchasers. Here therefore his character is developed. With St. Paul godliness was gain; but with this man gain produces godliness. Machiavel (a writer never accused of superstition) says thus: "Among all excellent and illustrious men, they are most praise-worthy, "who have been the chief establishers of religion and divine worship. On the other side, they are "infamous and detestable, who are contemners and subverters of religion."

[A] See Montague on Ancient Republics, p. 308.

long. An open denial of the superintending Providence of the Deity, which is equivalent with respect to mankind to a denial of his existence, could never be publicly tolerated, or even openly avowed in a country professing itself christian. The revolution taking place soon after, and about the same time great improvements being made in useful and solid learning, religion likewise was secured on a more rational and permanent basis. The extremes of puritanism and the extremes of atheistical licentiousness were equally avoided by the pious and rational believer; while the sceptic and infidel was obliged to act and to write with somewhat more disguise, and under the softer and more equivocal term of "free thinking." This term was devised for the comfort of those, who still wished to lull their consciences asleep with regard to futurity; and the same principle still maintains its empire over the profuse and profligate sensualist to this day. But the term of free thinking is still further meliorated into having "liberal opinions and liberal sentiments of things;" which, if searched to the bottom, are generally found to signify neither more nor less than a freedom from the restraints of virtue and religion; or in the language of Hume and other writers of his stamp, from the shackles [B] of superstition. For these gentlemen of liberal opinions openly to avow themselves the disciples of Epicurus, and the admirers of his great poet Lucretius, would perhaps be too gross and barefaced a position to please the nice and fastidious ears of the present generation; who rather delight in the "elegant insinuations" of vice than in its open avowal; who talk for instance of tender sensibility and friendly attachment, in the midst of the corruption of innocence, or of adulterous connexion.—But in what are the present devotees of pleasure and abettors of scepticism and infidelity superior to the Epicureans and Lucretians of old? Is their theory more enlightened or their practice more pure? The modern infidels would form our principles on much the same mode of arguing, as was used on many points by the philosopher and the poet of old; whilst a late noble writer has given us a system of practical manners and morals (if morals they are to be called) admirably adapted to strike in with the principles of scepticism, and to exclude all attention to a life to come.—But what is the consequence of this joint system

[B] Jampridem vera rerum vocabula amisimus; quia bona aliena largiri liberalitas, malorum rerum audacia fortitudo vocatur.—CATO'S Speech in Sall. Cat.

of belief and practice? A life spent in elegant vice and polished [c] dissimulation; and a close of the scene at pleasure by a death of voluntary procurement. Thus that bond of integrity and virtue and self-denial, which a zeal for the honour of false deities (as long as they maintained it) produced in the Romans, is no longer upheld in a country, where the knowledge of the true God is publicly professed, but shamefully disregarded. Is it not therefore of the utmost importance to correct the abuses of education, to restore discipline, to encourage solid and religious principles of conduct, since the want of all these so manifestly leads to vice, infidelity and suicide?

But there is another favourite writer of the present age, who treads close on the heels of his late brother-historian; and though he does not professedly write pernicious essays, yet he is fond of rounding the laboured periods of his historic page with a "point" at the cause of virtue and religion. He too can ingeniously blend the idea of superstition with every religious impression; he too can talk of that "pious servitude," by which a man is unwarrantably restrained from compassing his own death. The following passage, in which the climax is evidently laboured for the sake of the concluding sentence, lets us as much into the author's sentiments on the subject of suicide, as if he had written a whole volume in its favour. "A Roman [d] accused of any capital crime " might prevent the sentence of the law by voluntary exile or death. Till his " guilt had been legally proved, his innocence was presumed, and his person " was free: till the votes of the last " century" had been counted and declared, " he might peaceably secede to any of the allied cities of Italy, or Greece, or " Asia. His fame and fortunes were preserved, at least to his children, by this " civil death; and he might still be happy in every rational and sensual enjoy- " ment, if a mind accustomed to the ambitious tumult of Rome could support " the uniformity and silence of Rhodes or Athens.—A bolder effort was re-

[c] How like are Lord Chesterfield's maxims (in his letters to his son) to some in Sallust's character of Cataline. *Aliud clausum in pectore, aliud promptum in lingua habere:—et magis vultum quàm ingenium bonum habere.*

"Let love be without dissimulation"—says the Apostle. "Let there be dissimulation without love"—says the Peer. Let the indifferent person judge, whether the Apostle or the Peer consults best for the common interests of society.

[d] See Gibben's Roman History, quarto, Vol. IV. Chap. xlv. P. 413.

"quired

“ quired to escape from the tyranny of the Cæsars: but this effort was ren-
 “ dered familiar by the maxims of the Stoics, the example of the bravest Ro-
 “ mans, and the legal encouragement of suicide. The bodies of the con-
 “ demned criminals were exposed to public infamy, and their children—a more
 “ serious evil—were reduced to poverty by the confiscation of their fortunes.
 “ But if the victims of Tiberius and Nero anticipated the decree of the prince
 “ or senate, their courage and despatch were recompensed by the applause of
 “ the public, the decent honours of burial, and the validity of their testaments.
 “ The exquisite avarice and cruelty of Domitian appears to have deprived the
 “ unfortunate of this last consolation, and it was still denied even by the cle-
 “ mency of the Antonines. A voluntary death, which in the case of a capital
 “ offence, intervened between the accusation and the sentence, was admitted as a
 “ confession of guilt, and the spoils of the deceased were seized by the inhuman
 “ claims of the treasury. Yet the Civilians have always respected the natural
 “ right of a citizen to dispose of his life; and the posthumous disgrace invented
 “ by Tarquin to check the despair of his subjects, was never revived or imitated
 “ by succeeding tyrants. The powers of the world have indeed lost their do-
 “ minion over him, who is resolved on death; and his arm can only be restrained
 “ by the religious apprehension of a future state. Suicides are enumerated by
 “ Virgil among the unfortunate rather than the guilty; and the poetical fables
 “ of the infernal shades could not seriously influence the faith or practice of
 “ mankind. But the precepts of the gospel or the church have at length im-
 “ posed a pious servitude on the minds of christians, and condemn them to
 “ expect without a murmur the last stroke of disease or the executioner.”—
 This “ pious servitude” of Gibbon is an exact counter-part of the “ supersti-
 tion” of Hume, which he complains “ chains men down to an hated being.”
 How kind then is it in these “ unsuperstitious” historians, who take so much
 pains to effect our liberation !

The clergy likewise are reduced by the pen of Gibbon to another curious di-
 lemma. In the opinion of Hume [E] “ the very virtues and zeal of the clergy
 “ are so many additional proofs of their hypocrisy :”—in the philosophic eye of

[E] See Hume's Essay on the Immortality of the Soul, or a note at the beginning of this chapter.

Gibbon, "the sins of the clergy are far less dangerous than their virtues [F]." —But in the name of God, what is the aim of these men of modern wisdom? What system of social union would they wish to establish? What is their philosophy, since religion they disclaim? Or what is to be the character of their wise man?—Is he not to be a contemner of all religious principles? Is he not to overthrow in speculation every substantial check against civil confusion and vice; and thereby to discourage in practice every thing that is serious and virtuous?—But in short, the publication of a certain anonymous writer [G] sufficiently points out the wise man of these modern philosophers. For to use the very expressions of that concealed assassin of all social union and happiness, he is to be one—"who dares to be honestly infamous; who is sincerely of opinion,—that hypocrisy and sanctity are strictly and accurately synonymous; that means denominated supernatural have in all cases been ineffectual, for that though moral patients have been cautious, orderly, decent, and even religious in the common sense of the word, yet none have been truly reformed; that all religious atonements are indirectly the motives of vice; that the last, the utmost effort of human villany is discoverable in the doctrine of eternal damnation; that calling suicide a crime is a diabolical doctrine, calculated only to keep people in misery, and to hinder all the subjects of a tyrant to a man from despatching themselves; that all the efforts in the world should be exerted to break this great chain—the persuasion of a future state, which binds the necks of its inhabitants to slavery and wretchedness."—This writer speaks plain at least, and discovers the size of that cloven foot, which lurks under the insidious language of elegant essays or sonorous periods. In this writer we see the full blaze of scepticism and infidelity; and if he think there is any merit in the application, let him take to himself and enjoy the undivided praise of being "honestly infamous."

[F] "The Protestants have dwelt with malicious pleasure on these characters of Anti-Christ (meaning Popes of the tenth century); but to a philosophic eye, the vices of the clergy are far less dangerous than their virtues."—GIBBON'S *Roman Hist.* Vol. V. C. xlix. P. 155. quarto.

[G] See "An Apology for professing the Religion of Nature in the Eighteenth Century." 1789.

C H A P. III.

A short account of Robeck the Swede and his book in favour of suicide.—The law concerning suicide in Sir Thomas More's Utopia.—Allowed by the Utopians (who were not supposed to be Christians) only in cases of extreme illness, and under sanction of the priests and magistrates; when such a sanction was not obtained, it was punished with ignominious burial.—Montagne's opinion of what the ancients thought of suicide.—He then states the usual arguments brought on both sides the question, gives examples, and quotes opinions:—relates the suicide of an Indian prince.—Pain and the fear of a worse death are the most justifiable causes of suicide in Montagne's opinion.—Montesquieu's arguments for and against suicide in the "Persian Letters;" in which he confirms the right of the state to punish it.—A passage in his "Grandeur and Fall of the Roman Empire," in which he seems to connect the principle of great enterprise with suicide, answered.—Two letters on suicide in Rousseau's "Nouvelle Heloise;" the former in favour of, the latter (supposed to contain Rousseau's own sentiments on the subject) against, its practice.—Some reflections on the same.—Voltaire doubts the custom of asking leave of the magistrate.—He inquires into the reasons, why modern heroes do not kill themselves rather than become captives, &c. as well as ancient ones?—He ascribes it not so much to the influence of the Christian religion (which does not bind he observes in worse instances), as to the fashion of the times.—Duelling (he says) as much against the principles of religion; but that "is" a fashion.—Beccaria's opinion, that suicide is not a proper object of civil punishment, considered.—His notion of suicide, as being a less evil to society than migration into another country, proved erroneous.—Migration and suicide very different in their nature, both with respect to one's country and one's self.—The work of Du Verger de Hauranne, Abbé de St. Cyran in favour of suicide, noticed.—A short account of Eustace Budgel and his aphorism in justification of suicide.—Its insidious tendency to draw in Addison's name, as an approver of suicide.—Remarks on "what Cato did and Addison approved."—Observations on Cato's dying speech in Addison's tragedy of that name.—English tragedies too full of self-murder; whereby its idea is rendered familiar

to an audience, and even committed before them without any degree of reprobation, but rather of applause.

IT may be thought presumptuous in a writer, to pretend to enter on the merits of a book, of which he confesses he has not been able to procure a sight: and yet as the volume of Robeck the Swede in favour of suicide is mentioned to have been written with much coolness and show of reasoning; and whose author confirmed his own speculation by his practice, it was thought fit not wholly to pass it by without [H] notice. The following account however, which is taken from a monthly publication, is sufficient to furnish the reader with an idea of the turn of argument used by Robeck, and to show, that the Swedish philosopher has as little forcible to advance in favour of suicide, as the English one.

“ To the Author of the Grand Magazine, &c. (Vol. I. Year 1758.)

“ SIR,

“ A friend of mine showed me lately a manuscript, which contained the following arguments in favour of suicide; which seemed chiefly to have determined the fate of a person, who left them in manuscript, enforced with all the strength of reasoning of which they are capable. The case of this unhappy person was as follows.—In the beginning of May 1734, one John Robeck, a Swede, aged near 62 years, came to Rintel, and in a letter to Mr. Tunck, then Rector Magnificus, desired to be matriculated in the books of that University. He was a native of Calmar, and son to the chief burgo-master of that city. His youth had been spent in a close application to the

[H] “ Robeck wrote an apology for suicide before he put an end to his life. I will not, after his example, write a book on the subject; neither am I well satisfied with that, which he has penned: but I hope in this discussion at least to imitate his moderation.”—1st Letter on Suicide in Rousseau's New Eloisa, or 114th of Collection.

In a note in the same letter is as follows. “ Robeck deliberated so gravely, that he had patience to write a book, a large voluminous, weighty, and dispassionate book: and when he had concluded according to his principles, that it was lawful to put an end to one's being, he destroyed himself with the same compofure that he wrote.”

“ Robeck wrote a voluminous and dispassionate apology for suicide, and when he had finished his book put a period to his own existence.”—Principles of Penal Law, 8vo. 1771.

“ learned

“ learned languages and useful sciences. But taking an early dislike to his coun-
 “ try he removed into Germany, where the Jesuits of Hildesheim prevailed on
 “ him to enter into their order ; and accordingly he made his profession in
 “ May 1735. He was employed in several important affairs, which he always
 “ discharged with the greatest honour and integrity ; his deportment procuring
 “ him esteem, and his talents respect and confidence. It appears by several
 “ very extensive commissions, that his superiors, as well as several distinguished
 “ prelates, conceived a very great opinion of him ; but being suddenly disgusted
 “ with his manner of life and the step he had taken, he left the order and
 “ came to Rintel, where he made the above request, which was readily [1]
 “ granted. Here he lived in retirement and profound application to study.
 “ About twelve months after his matriculation, Mr. Tunck received another
 “ letter from him, in which he acquainted him with a journey he was deter-
 “ mined to take ; desiring the rector to take care of a chest of books and about
 “ one hundred dollars till his return. The manner in which he expressed his
 “ resolution intimated indeed something singular. *Brevi discedam (says he) ul-*
 “ *timamque, opinor, institutam peregrinationem, atque ut omni ferè priore*
 “ *vitâ, ita ejus jam ad 64 penè annum protracto fine, implebo pressiore sensu*
 “ *communem humanæ conditionis fortem.*—On the 17th of June following he
 “ again wrote from Bremen to the Rintel professor, consigning to him a small
 “ sum of money and other effects, specifying the manner in which they were to
 “ be disposed of in case he did not return : and some days after Mr. Tunck re-
 “ ceived an account from Bremen, that Mr. Robeck, having hired a little boat,
 “ went into it alone very neatly dressed ; and that his body was afterwards
 “ found in the river three miles from Bremen. Such was the end of this un-
 “ fortunate man, who maintained the following arguments in favour of suicide.

“ 1. There is no law that actually forbids a person to deprive himself of
 “ life.

“ 2. The love of life is to be subservient to that of happiness.

[1] There is a manifest error in the dates relating to Robeck's matriculation, &c. compared with this passage.

“ 3. Our body is a mean and contemptible machine, the preservation of which we ought not so highly to value.

“ 4. If the human soul be mortal, it receives but a slight injury ;—if immortal, the greatest advantage.

“ 5. A benefit ceases to be so, when it becomes troublesome ; and then surely a man ought to be allowed to lay it down.

“ 6. A voluntary death is often the only method of avoiding the greatest crimes.

“ 7. Suicide is justified by the example of most nations in the known world.”

These are the same arguments that are used by all defenders of suicide in every country, who attempt to maintain the propriety of the action on any principles of reasoning ; and as such they have been fully answered in a variety of shapes in different parts of this work. However, as they stand here altogether, we will give them a very brief review.

1. The truth of the first proposition may be positively denied. The law of self-preservation is an instinct or natural law engraven on our hearts ; and when the precept of revelation enjoins “ thou shalt not kill,” or “ thou shalt do no murder”—it contains under it, without force of construction, a prohibition of self, as well as of other, murder.

2. As to the second proposition ; we may have cause to wish for death without its being lawful to accelerate its arrival.

3. As to the third assertion, it may be asked, when does the human body appear more mean and contemptible than when deprived of its vital principles and powers by means of suicide ?

4. His fourth argument is untrue in both its positions. For neither would the injury in the one case be slight, nor would the advantage in the other be so obvious, as he maintains ; all which has been abundantly proved in other places.

5. When

5. When the benefit of life becomes so irksome, as to incline us towards suicide, it happens (generally speaking) from our having some way or other “abused” that benefit. We do not therefore stand in the condition of persons at liberty to continue or refuse, but as accountable for our “use” of that benefit, which we have received.

6. That “a voluntary death is often the only method of avoiding the greatest crimes”—is an assertion not founded in truth; since no one can be “forced” into the commission of any crime; that being no crime in any one, which is the effect of compulsion. But if Robeck means flying by a voluntary death from the danger to which our impetuous passions might expose the innocent, it is certainly our duty to fly from the excess or exercise of those impetuous passions rather than from life.

7. How the “practice” of any thing includes its “justification” is a point we leave with Robeck to prove. Thieving, adultery, murder, have been practised at all times, and are still practising among all nations; but would Robeck plead, that they are therefore justifiable?—But if he plead, that the wisest and greatest among the Heathens both defended and practised suicide, it has been already shown at large what degree of attention is due to such examples.—This short account of Robeck and his work shall be closed with Dr. Hey’s opinion of it in his Dissertation on Suicide published 1785. “The tedious volume written in defence of suicide by the Swede, Robeck, whose death in 1735 appears to have been the effect of design, is a strong proof, how little force of reasoning is requisite to satisfy a person in that to which his own inclination leads him. This volume may be safely entrusted in the hands of the unprejudiced reader; and in those of the prejudiced one, it is difficult to say what can be safely trusted. Our time would be egregiously mispent in giving an answer to so wild, so diffuse, and so weak a defence of the fatal practice, which we are opposing.” (P. 63.)

It was made an argument in favour of suicide by Donne,—“that it had not only the countenance of many flourishing and well-policed states, but also of imaginary commonwealths, which cunning authors have ideated, and in which such enormous faults would not have been countenanced.” He “instances

instances in Plato de Legibus, and in Sir Thomas More's Utopia. The former has been considered in its proper place; the latter shall now be introduced.—The passage alluded to in the Utopia is to be found in the second book, of which the following is a translation.

“ The Utopians attend their sick with great assiduity. They console such as labour under dreadful disorders by sitting with them, talking to them, and rendering them every comfort in their power. But if the disease be obstinate, and yield not to the powers of medicine, and besides harasses the patient with continued and excruciating tortures, then the priests and magistrates exhort the man,—that seeing he is become unfit for any offices of life, troublesome to others, and burdensome to himself—to accelerate his own death; and that he would no longer determine to nourish a plague and torture within himself; but since life was become such a torment, would not hesitate to die. That in full confidence of good hope, he would either deliver himself by his own hands from the bitterness of his life, as from a prison or sharp sting, or would cheerfully suffer it to be taken away from him by others. That since he would break through nothing advantageous to himself by his death, but only snatch himself from sufferings, it would be a point of prudence to do so; and moreover, since he would only obey the counsels of the priests, that is, of the interpreters of the divine will, in so doing, he would also act as became a man of piety and religion.—Such as yield to these persuasions either voluntarily close their lives by fasting, or being first stupified by soporifics receive their dissolution from the hands of others. But they neither take away any man's life on such occasions against his consent, nor diminish any part of their assiduities towards him, after having attempted to persuade him, that it is honourable so to die.—At other times, he who destroys himself without having his cause of doing it approved by the priests and senate, is not thought worthy of having his corpse either covered with earth, or consumed in the fire; but it is thrown without burial into some filthy bog or quagmire.”

This is all the encouragement that is given to suicide in More's imaginary state of Utopia. It is to be remembered, that the Utopians were not supposed to be Christians, though capable of instructing christian states, in many of their whole-

wholesome laws and institutions. The case of extreme sickness alone is mentioned; that case, which can only be fortified against by the comforts and consolations of christian promises and rewards for sufferings: nor even in that case is it left to the determination of the sufferer himself, but the priests and magistrates are to judge of its expediency and to give their counsel accordingly. The life of man under heathen governments was considered more as the property of the state than even as his own or his God's; and accordingly when that state adjudged to a man the liberty of quitting life, it might be presumed he did it innocently, if not honourably. Sir Thomas More even adds the authority of religion as necessary to be obtained; but then it was supposed to be a religion, which, though purged from the grosser errors of heathenism, had not yet passed through the purifying streams of revelation. This alone teaches the due mixture of all our duties to God, to the state, and to ourselves; and most strongly evinces, that no power upon earth can justify our own voluntary destruction in the sight of God.

A chapter on this grave and serious subject is to be found, where perhaps one should least have looked for it, among the lively sallies of Montagne's imagination. It is in the second book of his *Essays*, Chap. iii. and is entitled "The custom of the isle of Cea [κ];" and the substance is contained in what follows. Montagne begins with observing, "that most of the opinions of the
 " ancients seemed to him to concur in this;—that it is better to die, when there
 " is more ill than good in living, and that to preserve life to our own incon-
 " venience and torment is contrary to the very rules of nature. He observes
 " also, that when the ancients talked of despising death, they meant more than
 " patiently waiting for it; they meant hastening it to ourselves, whenever out-
 " ward circumstances prevailed, which might be worse to bear than death itself.
 " He then proceeds to state the common arguments both for and against its
 " practice, and giving the stoical method of reasoning says, that the wise man
 " lives as long as he ought, not as long as he can; that nature is kind in giving
 " us the power of dying, and that there are a thousand ways out of life, though
 " but one into it; that we are not to complain of that world, which detains
 " us not against our wills: that death is the cure, not of one, but of every
 " evil; an harbour never to be feared, often to be sought; that it is all the

[κ] See the account of this custom of the Cceans described Part IV. C. vi.

“ same, whether a man gives his end to himself or stays to receive it ; only
 “ that the most voluntary death is the most brave ; that life depends on the
 “ pleasure of others, death on our own ; that the ordinary methods of curing
 “ disorders are often at the hazard of life, one step further we are cured indeed ;
 “ that God gives us leave to die, when to live is manifestly worse than to die.—
 “ But all these arguments (Montagne observes) do not pass without dispute.
 “ For many on the other hand affirm ; that we cannot quit our station in the
 “ garrison without leave of the commander ; that we were placed here, not for
 “ ourselves alone, but for the glory of God and the good of others, and there-
 “ fore God alone can dismiss us ; that our country requires our service and
 “ obedience to her laws, and has an action of manslaughter against us ; that if
 “ these fail to punish us, we are punished as deserters in another world ; that
 “ there is more constancy in enduring the chain to which we are tied than in
 “ breaking it ; more pregnant evidence of fortitude in a Regulus than a Cato ;
 “ that it is indiscretion and impatience that pushes us on to these precipices.
 “ No accidents can make true virtue turn her back ; she seeks and requires
 “ evils, pain, and grief, as the things by which she is nourished and supported ;
 “ the menaces of tyrants serve only to animate and rouse her. It is cowardice
 “ not valour, to lie snug in a furrow under a tomb, that we may evade the
 “ blows of fortune. Virtue never stops or goes out of her path for the greatest
 “ storm that blows. Endeavouring to evade evils and death we fly into the
 “ mouth of death. The opinion, which makes so little of life, is ridiculous ;
 “ for it is our being, it is all that we have. Things of a nobler and more
 “ elevated being may indeed accuse this of ours ; but it is against nature to
 “ condemn and make little account of ourselves ; it is a disease peculiar to man,
 “ and not discerned in any other creature, to hate and to despise itself. It is
 “ a vanity to desire to be something else than what we are. Security, indo-
 “ lence, and the privation of the evils of life, which we think to purchase at
 “ the price of dying, are of no manner of advantage to us ; that man evades
 “ war to very little purpose, who can have no fruition of peace ; as imperti-
 “ nently does he avoid labour and toil, who cannot enjoy the repose.” Thus
 far Montagne argues on both sides of the question. He then proceeds to re-
 mark, “ that among the favourers of suicide there is great debate as to the
 “ “ handsome exit.” For it is not every cause that will justify suicide even in
 “ their opinion. Fantastic and senseless humour will not do it, though it has
 “ prompted

“ prompted not only individuals, but whole bodies of men, to kill themselves.
 “ He then instances Milesian virgins and the story of Cleomenes. But all in-
 “ conveniences in the world (he says) are not sufficient to make a man die to
 “ evade them; especially as changes of fortune are so sudden and unexpected.
 “ All things are to be hoped for while a man lives. He instances in Josephus.
 “ That Brutus and Cassius threw away the remains of liberty, which rested in
 “ themselves. He then enumerates a list of suicides to avoid slavery. Pliny
 “ (he says) allows three sorts of diseases, from the pain of which a man ought
 “ to deliver himself by suicide; the worst of which is the stone in the bladder
 “ with its attendant excruciating circumstances; but Seneca only allows those
 “ disorders of long standing, which discompose the functions of the soul to be
 “ sufficient to justify the action. Montagne also notices the virgin-suicides
 “ Pelagia and Sophronia; and then tells us a story of one Ninachetuen an In-
 “ dian lord, who, as soon as he heard the first whisper of the Portugal
 “ viceroy’s determination to dispossess him (without reason) of the command in
 “ Malacca, and to transfer it to the king of Campar, took the following reso-
 “ lution. He caused a long scaffold to be erected, supported by columns
 “ royally adorned with tapestry and strewed with flowers and abundance of
 “ perfumes; all which being done, he came out into the street, arrayed in
 “ cloth of gold and studded with jewels of immense value, and mounted the
 “ scaffold; at one corner of which he had ordered a pile of aromatic wood to
 “ be set on fire. The novelty of the scene, and a total ignorance in every one
 “ of what was its intent, drew together an immense crowd of spectators.
 “ When Ninachetuen with a manly and undaunted countenance began to re-
 “ monstrate—“ how much he had obliged the Portuguese nation, and with
 “ what fidelity he had behaved; that having so often sword in hand manifested
 “ in behalf of others, that honour was dearer to him than life, he was not to
 “ abandon it in his own case: that fortune denying him all means of op-
 “ posing the affront designed him, his courage at least enjoined him to free
 “ himself from the sense of it; and neither to serve for a fable to the people
 “ nor for a triumph to men less deserving than himself:”—having said which
 “ he leaped [L] into the flames.” Montagne concludes with observing upon
 the

[L] The following story related by Ramsay in his Essay on the Treatment of African Slaves
 (8vo. 1784), shows, that a sense of honour and sensibility of feeling may be as great in an Indian slave,
 Vol. II.

the whole “ that pain and the fear of suffering a worse death seem to him the
 “ most excusable incitements to suicide.” He takes no notice how the subject
 may

as in an Indian prince. “ The Spectator (says Ramsay) in his N^o 215 has celebrated a rude instance
 “ in two negroes in the island of St. Christopher, which on inquiry I find to be true. I will con-
 “ firm this by the relation of a deed, which happened within these thirty years, for which I have no
 “ name. As I had my information from a friend of the master’s, in the master’s presence, who ac-
 “ knowledged it to be genuine, the truth of it is indisputable. The only liberty I have taken with
 “ it has been, to give words to the sentiment that inspired it.—Quashee was brought up in the fa-
 “ mily with his master, as his play-fellow from his childhood. Being a lad of towardly parts, he
 “ rose to be driver or black overseer under his master, when the plantation fell to him by succession.
 “ He retained for his master the tenderness that he had felt in childhood for his play-mate; and the
 “ respect, with which the relation of master inspired him, was softened by the affection, which the
 “ remembrance of their boyish intimacy kept alive in his breast. He had no separate interest of his
 “ own, and in his master’s absence redoubled his diligence, that his affairs might receive no injury
 “ from it. In short, here was the most delicate, yet most strong, and seemingly indissoluble tie,
 “ that could bind master and slave together. Though the master had judgment to know when he
 “ was well served, and policy to reward good behaviour, he was inexorable when a fault was com-
 “ mitted; and when there was but an apparent cause of suspicion, he was too apt to let prejudice usurp
 “ the place of proof. Quashee could not exculpate himself to his satisfaction, for something done con-
 “ trary to the discipline of the plantation, and was threatened with the ignominious punishment of
 “ the cart-whip; and he knew his master too well to doubt the performance of his promise. A negro,
 “ who was grown up to manhood, without undergoing a solemn cart-whipping, as some by good
 “ chance will, especially if distinguished by any accomplishment among his fellows, takes pride in what he
 “ calls the smoothness of his skin, its being unrazed by the whip; and he would be at more pains,
 “ and use more diligence to escape such cart-whipping, than many of our lower sort would use to shun
 “ the gallows. It is not uncommon for a sober good negro to stab himself mortally, because some
 “ boy-overseer has flogged him, for what he reckoned a trifle, or for his caprice, or threatened him
 “ with a flogging, where he thought he did not deserve it. Quashee dreaded this mortal wound to his
 “ honour, and slipped away unnoticed, with a view to avoid it.

“ It is usual for slaves, who expect to be punished for their own fault or their master’s caprice, to
 “ go to some friend of their master’s and beg him to carry them home and mediate for them. This
 “ is found to be so useful, that humane masters are glad of the pretence of such mediations, and will
 “ secretly procure them to avoid the necessity of punishing for trifles: it otherwise not being prudent
 “ to pass over without correction, a fault once taken notice of; while by this method an appearance
 “ of authority and discipline is kept up, without the severity of it. Quashee therefore withdrew, re-
 “ solved to shelter himself, and to save the glossy honours of his skin, under favour of this custom, till
 “ he had an opportunity of applying to an advocate. He lurked among his master’s negro huts, and
 “ his fellow-slaves had too much honour, and too great regard for him, to betray to their master the
 “ place of his retreat. Indeed it is hardly possible in any case, to get one slave to inform against ano-
 “ ther, so much more honour have they than Europeans of low condition.

may be affected by the rules and precepts of the christian religion, or indeed of any religion at all ; which however is not matter of wonder in him.

The

“ The following day a feast was kept, on account of his master’s nephew then coming of age ; amidst the good humour of which Quashee hoped to succeed in his application ; but before he could execute his design, perhaps just as he was setting out to go and solicit this mediation, his master, while walking about his fields, fell in with him. Quashee on discovering him ran off, and the master, who is a robust man, pursued him. A stone or a clod tripped Quashee up, just as the other reached out his hand to seize him. They fell together and wrestled for the mastery, for Quashee also was a stout man, and the elevations of his mind added vigour to his arm. At last after a severe struggle, in which each had been several times uppermost, Quashee got firmly seated on his master’s breast, now panting and out of breath, and with his weight, his thighs, and one hand, secured him motionless. He then drew out a sharp knife, and while the master lay in dreadful expectation, helpless, and shrinking into himself, Quashee thus addressed him.—“ Master, I was bred up with you from a child ; I was your play-mate when a boy : I have loved you as myself ; your interest has been my study ; I am innocent of the cause of your suspicion ; had I been guilty, my attachment to you might have pleaded for me. Yet you have condemned me to a punishment, of which I must ever have borne the disgraceful marks ; thus only can I avoid them.” With these words he drew the knife with all his strength against his own throat, and fell down dead without a groan on his master, bathing him in his blood.”

The story alluded to above in the Spectator N^o 215 is as follows. “ Mens passions operate variously, and appear in different kinds of actions, according as they are more or less rectified and swayed by reason. When one hears of negroes, who upon the death of their masters, or upon changing their service, hang themselves upon the next tree, as it frequently happens in our American plantations, who can forbear admiring their fidelity, though it expresses itself in so dreadful a manner ? What might not that savage greatness of soul, which appears in these wretches on many occasions, be raised to, were it rightly cultivated ?—I cannot forbear mentioning a story, which I have lately heard, and which is so well attested, that I have no manner of reason to suspect the truth of it. I may call it a kind of wild tragedy that passed about twelve years ago at St. Christopher’s, one of our British Leeward Islands. The negroes, who were the persons concerned in it, were all of them slaves of a gentleman, who is now in England. This gentleman among his negroes had a young woman, who was looked upon as a most extraordinary beauty by those of her own complexion. He had at the same time two young fellows, who were likewise negroes and slaves, both remarkable for the comeliness of their persons, and for the friendship which they bore to each other. It unfortunately happened that both of them fell in love with the female negroe abovementioned, who would have been very glad to have taken either of them for her husband, provided they could agree between themselves, which should be the man. But they were both so passionately in love with her, that neither of them could think of giving her up to his rival ; and at the same time were so true to one another, that neither of them would think of gaining her without his friend’s consent. The torments of these two lovers were the discourse of the family to which they belonged, who could not forbear observing the strange complication of passions, which perplexed the hearts of the poor negroes, who often dropped expressions of the uneasiness they underwent, and how impossible it was

The celebrated Montesquieu (beside what has been already noticed from his "Spirit of Laws" [M]) has taken up the subject of self-destruction in his famous "Persian Letters."—Usbek the Persian (supposed then to be resident in Paris) writes thus to his friend Ibben at Smyrna, and receives his answer. (See Letters lxxvi and lxxvii.)

" Usbek to his friend Ibben, at Smyrna."

" In Europe the laws are very severe against self-murderers. They put them to death, if I may so say, a second time; they are ignominiously dragged through the streets, marked with infamy, and their effects confiscated. It seems to me, Ibben, that these are very unjust laws. When I am loaded with grief, misery, and contempt, why should I be restrained from putting an end to my pains, and be cruelly deprived of a remedy that I have in my power? Why would they have me labour for a society of which I consent no longer to be a member? Why to hold, in spite of myself, a compact made without my agreement? Society is founded upon mutual advantage; but when it becomes burdensome to me, what should hinder me from quitting it? Life was given me as a favour; I may then return it; when it is no more so: the cause ceasing, the effect then ought also to cease. Would a prince desire that I should be his subject, when I reap none of the advantages of subjection? Can my fellow-citizens ask this unequal division of their benefit and my despair? Will God, contrary to all other benefactors, condemn me to accept of favours, which oppress me? I am obliged to obey the laws, whilst I live under the laws; but when I no longer live under them, can they still bind

" for either of them ever to be happy.—After a long struggle between love and friendship, truth and jealousy, they one day took a walk together in a wood, carrying their mistress along with them; where after abundance of lamentations, they stabbed her to the heart, of which she immediately died. A slave, who was at his work hard by, hearing the shrieks of the dying person, ran to see what was the occasion of them. He there discovered the woman lying dead on the ground, with the two negroes on each side of her, kissing the dead corpse, weeping over it and beating their breasts in the utmost agonies of grief and despair. He immediately ran to the English family with the news of what he had seen; who upon coming to the place saw the woman dead, and the two negroes expiring by her with wounds they had given themselves."

[M] See Part IV. Chap vii. and Part V. Chap. iii. and iv. in notes, for what Montesquieu has advanced on the punishment of suicide in Greece, Rome, and England.

" me?"

“ me? But it is said, you disturb the order of Providence. God hath united
 “ your soul to your body, and you separate them : you then oppose his designs,
 “ and you resist his will. What would they say by this? Do I disturb the order
 “ of Providence, when I alter the modifications of matter, and render square
 “ a bowl, which the first laws of motion, that is to say, the laws of creation
 “ and preservation, have made round? No, without doubt : I do but use the
 “ right, which hath been given me ; and in this sense, I may disturb, accord-
 “ ing to my fancy, all nature, without its being said, that I oppose myself to
 “ Providence. When my soul shall be separated from my body, will there be
 “ less order, and less regularity in the universe? Do you believe that this new
 “ combination would be less perfect, and less dependent upon the general laws?
 “ that the world can thereby lose any thing? that the works of God would be
 “ less great? or rather less immense? Do you think that my body, when be-
 “ come a blade of grass, a worm, a green turf, would be changed into a work
 “ of nature less worthy of her? and that my soul, disengaged from all its
 “ earthly part, would become less pure? These ideas, my dear Ibben, have no
 “ other source but our pride. We are not at all sensible of our littleness ; and
 “ however it may be, we are willing to be reckoned of consequence in the uni-
 “ verse, and to be there an object of importance. We imagine, that the an-
 “ nihilation of such a perfect being as ourselves, would degrade all nature ;
 “ and we do not conceive, that one man more or less in the world—what did
 “ I say “ one?”—all mankind together, a hundred millions of heads such as
 “ ours, are but one small minute atom; which God perceives not but from the
 “ immensity of his knowledge.”

“ Paris, the 15th of the moon Saphar, 1715.”

“ Ibben to Ufbek at Paris.”

“ It appears to me, my dear Ufbek, that to a true Mussulman, misfortunes
 “ are not so much chastisements as warnings.. Those are valuable days indeed,
 “ which lead us to expiate our offences.. It is the time of prosperity, which
 “ ought to be shortened. To what end does all our impatience serve, but to
 “ make us see that we would be happy, independently of him who bestows hap-
 “ piness, because he is happiness itself? If a being is composed of two parts,
 “ and that the necessity of preserving their union is the greatest mark of sub-
 “ mission to the decrees of the Creator, this then may be made a religious law :
 “ if

“ if this necessity of preserving that union, is a better security of human actions, it may be made a civil law.”

“ Smyrna, the last day of the moon Saphar, 1715.”

The arguments of Usbek have all been answered at large in the examination of Hume's Essay and in other places. The reply of Ibben (which we are to suppose discloses the sentiments of Montesquieu himself) is concise, pertinent, and solid. “ That the evils of life should be considered as warnings; that the days of adversity are most valuable, and those of prosperity most dangerous; that whatever tends to establish our submission to our Creator in all his dispensations is a proper subject of religious law; and that as far as that submission is an improvement of our civil interests, it may and ought to be enforced by the laws of society.” These are serious and important truths; and the consequence naturally flows, that to reprobate and punish self-murder in all shapes that are possible by human laws, is both rational and just.

But there is a reflection made by Montesquieu in another work, which requires some notice. “ It is certain (says he, *Grandeur des Romains*, &c. C. xii.) that men are grown less courageous, and are less spurred on to greater enterprises than they were, when by the power they assumed over their own lives, they were enabled to escape from every other power.”—Even granting the position, that men are now less spurred on to great enterprises than formerly (a fact however not to be readily granted without explanation and limitation) yet how does his consequence necessarily follow, that the spirit of freedom and courage ceased at the same time with the spirit of suicide? or that their respective failures had any dependence on each other? That contempt of death, which urged the heroes of antiquity to perform wonderful exploits of personal valour, and to engage in such hazardous enterprises, did not arise from fostering the idea that they could kill themselves at pleasure (since in such undertakings they rather exposed their lives to be taken away by others), but because they valued honour, liberty, and their country's glory far beyond their own lives; and because their only road to fame lay through the rough paths of virtue and personal danger. If men therefore are become less undaunted and less enterprising in warlike achievements than formerly, it is because the cast and temper of the times are totally different; it is because military glory is in less
general

general estimation, and the sanguinary heroes of the field have been forced to yield a portion of their former unrivalled fame, to the milder and more benevolent virtues of the peaceful citizen. For which alteration of opinion and manners we are indebted to the introduction of a benign and gracious system of morality, whose motives and consequences were unknown to the ancients ; in short to those sentiments of universal humanity, those precepts of gentleness and love enjoined by the “ Prince of Peace.”

But the question also must be asked ;—when was suicide most practised, especially at Rome ?—Not in the times of freedom or bold enterprise, but in those of effeminacy, luxury, and despotism. How very few of the virtuous champions of ancient Rome did allow the principle of suicide, or did make use of it under their adverse fortunes ! And even of those who died by their own hands—did Cato, Brutus, and others oppose the tyrants of their country or fight the more manfully, because they knew they could kill themselves when they pleased ? No ; they had more noble and disinterested motives to spur them on—the love of liberty and their country ; and they would have spurned the idea of acting upon no better a principle than might have equally prompted the basest villain to commit the basest action ; viz. from knowing that he could escape from every human power. For it must be remembered, that if the principle of suicide be once allowed to urge to acts of intrepidity and courageous enterprise, it must also be allowed to be as effectual an inciter [N] of every species of iniquity ; and then it is easy to see on which side the weight would be likely to turn in the scale of social interests, on the prevalence of this opinion. The usual judgment then and precision of Montesquieu seems to have failed him here, in that he confounds a general contempt of death, or rather a desire of exposing life in the achievement of some courageous and glorious action, with a sneaking out of the world in the spirit of a self-interested and voluntary murder.

There are two famous letters on this subject written by Rousseau in his “ New Eloisa ;” the first in its defence, the second in answer to it. The supposed writer of the first is St. Prieux, the lover of Eloisa, who is adducing reasons in justification of its commission, being ready to put it in practice on himself, when

[N] See this point enlarged on in Part II. C. iii.

compelled to resign all pretensions to her alliance. The reply is from his great friend Lord B. an Englishman, and is supposed to contain Rousseau's own sentiments on the subject. These letters shall be transcribed here in an English dress, that the reader may be under no necessity of applying elsewhere, if he wish to peruse them; and as the principal arguments have been noticed in other places, a few short observations on particular passages shall be made in the shape of notes.

Letter CXIV. To Lord B——.

“ Yes, my Lord, I confess it, the weight of life is too heavy for my soul. I have long endured it as a burden; I have lost every thing which could make it dear to me, and nothing remains but irksomeness and vexation. I am told, however, that I am not at liberty to dispose of my life, without the permission of that Being from whom I received it. I am sensible likewise that you have a right over it by more titles than one. Your care has twice preserved it, and your goodness is its constant security. I will never dispose of it, till I am certain that I may do it without a crime, and till I have not the least hope of employing it for your service.

You told me that I should be of use to you; why did you deceive me? Since we have been in London, so far from thinking of employing me in your concerns, you have been kind enough to make me your only concern. How superfluous is your obliging solicitude! My Lord, you know I abhor a crime, even worse than I detest life; I adore the supreme Being—I owe every thing to you; I have an affection for you; you are the only person on earth to whom I am attached. Friendship and duty may chain a wretch to this earth: sophistry and vain pretences will never detain him. Enlighten my understanding, speak to my heart; I am ready to hear you, but remember, that despair is not to be imposed [o] upon.

You would have me apply to the test of reason: I will; let us reason. You desire me to deliberate in proportion to the importance of the question in de-

[o] St. Prioux might have added with much truth; “but it always imposes on itself:”—since passions make to feel, but never to see and understand.

bate. I agree to it. Let us investigate truth with temper and moderation ; let us discuss this general proposition with the same indifference we should treat any other. Robeck wrote an apology for suicide before he put an end to his life. I will not after his example write a book on the subject, neither am I well satisfied with that which he has penned ; but I hope in this discussion at least to imitate his moderation.—I have for a long time meditated on this awful subject. You must be sensible that I have, for you know my destiny, and yet I am alive. The more I reflect, the more I am convinced, that the question may be reduced to this fundamental proposition. Every man has a right by nature to pursue what he thinks good, and avoid what he thinks evil, in all respects which are [Q] not injurious to others. When our life therefore becomes a misery to ourselves, and is of advantage to no one, we are at liberty to put an end to our being. If there be any such thing as a clear and self-evident principle, certainly this is one ; and if this be subverted, there is scarce an action in life which may not be made criminal.

Let us hear what the philosophers say on this subject. First, they consider life as something which is not our own, because we hold it as a gift ;—but because it has been given us, is it for that reason not our own ? Has not God given these sophists two arms ? nevertheless, when they are under apprehensions of a mortification, they do not scruple to amputate one, or both if there be occasion. By a parity of reasoning we may convince those, who believe in the immortality of the soul ; for if I sacrifice my arm to the preservation of something more precious, which is my body, I have the same right to sacrifice my body to the preservation of something more valuable, which is, the happiness of my existence. If all the gifts, which heaven has bestowed, be naturally designed for our good, they are certainly too apt to change their nature ; and Providence has endowed us with reason, that we discern the difference. If this rule did not authorise us to choose the one and reject the other, to what use would it serve among mankind ?

[Q] It has been abundantly shown, how little capable men are of judging what is good or evil for them on their “ whole existence ” from any partial happiness or misery that befalls them here ; and especially while they are under the influence of any impetuous passion : and therefore how cautious they should be of making the desperate and irretrievable plunge of suicide.—Besides, our duty to God is still in the way, and cannot be got over—See Part II. C. ii. and C. v.

But they turn this weak objection into a thousand shapes. They consider a man living upon earth as a soldier placed on duty. God, say they, has fixed you in this world, why do you quit your station without his leave?—But you, who argue thus, has he not stationed you in the town where you was born, why therefore do you quit it without his leave? is not misery of itself a sufficient permission? whatever station Providence has assigned me, whether it be in a regiment, or on the earth at large, he intended me to stay there while I found my situation agreeable, and to leave it when it became intolerable. This is the voice of nature, and the voice of God. I agree that we must wait for an order; but when I die a natural death, God does not order me to quit life, he takes it from me; it is by rendering life insupportable, that he orders me to quit it. In the first case, I resist with all my force; in the second, I have the merit of obedience.

Can you conceive, that there are some people so absurd, as to arraign suicide as a kind of rebellion against Providence, by an attempt to fly from his laws?—but we do not put an end to our being in order to withdraw ourselves from his commands, but to execute them. What! does the power of God extend no further than to my body? Is there a spot in the universe, which is not subject to his power, and will that power have less immediate influence over me, when my being is refined, and thereby becomes less compound, and of nearer resemblance to the divine essence? No, his justice and goodness are the foundation of my hopes; and if I thought that death would withdraw me from his power, I would give up my resolution to die.

This is one of the quibbles of the Phædo, which in other respects abounds with sublime truths. If your slave destroys himself, says Socrates to Cebes, would you not punish him, for having unjustly deprived you of your property; prithee, good Socrates, do we not belong to God after we are dead? The case you put is not applicable; you ought to argue thus: if you incumber [R] your slave with an habit, which confines him from discharging his duty properly, will you punish him for quitting it, in order to render you better service?

[R] But if a master bid his slave wear a certain habit however cumbersome, and the slave refuse;—how can he be deemed other than a refractory slave?—See the passage in the Phædo fully examined in Part IV. C. iii.

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the grand error lies in making life of too great importance; as if our existence depended upon it, and that death was a total annihilation. Our life is of no consequence in the sight of God; it is of no importance in the eyes of reason; neither ought it to be of any in our own sight; when we quit our body, we only lay aside an inconvenient habit. Is this circumstance so painful, to be the occasion of so much disturbance? my Lord, these declaimers are not in earnest. Their arguments are absurd and cruel; for they aggravate the supposed crime, as if it put a period to existence, and they punish it, as if that existence was eternal.

With respect to Plato's *Phædo*, which has furnished them with the only specious argument that has ever been advanced, the question is discussed there in a very light and desultory manner. Socrates being condemned, by an unjust judgment, to lose his life in a few hours, had no occasion to enter into an accurate inquiry, whether he was at liberty to dispose of it himself. Supposing him really to have been the author of these discourses, which Plato ascribes to him, yet believe me, my Lord, he would have meditated with more attention on the subject, had he been in circumstances, which required him to reduce his speculations to practice; and a strong proof that no valid objection can be drawn from that immortal work against the right of disposing of our own lives, is, that Cato read it twice through the very night, that he destroyed himself.

The same sophisters make it a question, whether [s] life can ever be an evil? But when we consider the multitude of errors, torments, and vices, with which it abounds, one would rather be inclined to doubt, whether it can ever be a blessing? Guilt incessantly besieges the most virtuous of mankind. Every moment he lives he is in danger of falling a prey to the wicked, or of being wicked himself. To struggle and to endure is his lot in this world; that of the dishonest man is to do evil, and to suffer. In every other particular they differ, and only agree in sharing the miseries of life in common. If you required authorities and facts, I could recite you the oracles of old, the answers of the sages, and produce instances, where acts of virtue have been recompensed with

[s] Life (as we all know) is a mixture of good and evil. But the evil itself is in its consequences a blessing, when rightly used by us, if we take in the compass of our "whole existence," and do not confine our thoughts to this life only.

death. But let us leave these considerations, my Lord; it is to you to whom I address myself, and I ask you, what is the chief attention of a wise man in this life, except, if I may be allowed the expression, to collect himself inwardly, and endeavour, even while he lives, to be dead to every object of sense? The only way by which wisdom directs us to avoid the miseries of human nature—is it not to detach ourselves from all earthly objects, from every thing that is gross in our composition, to retire within ourselves, and to raise our thoughts to sublime contemplations? If therefore our misfortunes are derived from our passions and errors, with what eagerness should we wish for a state, which will deliver us both from the one and the other? What is the fate of those sons of sensuality, who indiscreetly multiply their torments by their pleasures? They in fact destroy their existence by extending their connexions in this life; they increase the weight of their crimes by their numerous attachments; they relish no enjoyments, but what are succeeded by a thousand bitter wants; the more lively their sensibility, the more acute their sufferings; the stronger they are attached to life, the more wretched they become.

But admitting it, in general, a benefit to mankind to crawl upon the earth with gloomy sadness, I do not mean to intimate, that the human race ought with one common consent to destroy themselves, and make the world one immense grave. But there are miserable beings, who are too much exalted [T] to be governed by vulgar opinion; to them despair and grievous torments are the passports of nature. It would be as ridiculous to suppose that life can be a blessing to such men, as it was absurd in the sophister Possidonium to deny that it was an evil, at the same time that he endured all the torments of the gout. While life is agreeable to us, we earnestly wish to prolong it, and nothing but a sense of extreme misery can extinguish the desire of existence: for we naturally conceive a violent dread of death, and this dread conceals the miseries of human nature from our sight. We drag a painful and melancholy life for a long time before we can resolve to quit it; but when once life becomes so in-

[T] True;—and what is the consequence?—that they set their own opinions against every thing that is commonly believed, and exalt “themselves” into standards of right and wrong.

supportable

supportable as to overcome [u] the horror of death, then existence is evidently a great evil, and we cannot disengage ourselves from it too soon. Therefore, though we cannot exactly ascertain the point at which it ceases to be a blessing, yet at least we are certain that it is an evil long before it appears to be such; and with every sensible man the right of quitting life is, by a great deal, precedent to the temptation.

This is not all. After they have denied that life can be an evil, in order to bar our right of making away with ourselves; they confess immediately afterwards that it is an evil, by reproaching us with want of courage to support it. According to them, it is cowardice to withdraw ourselves from pain and trouble, and there are none but [x] dastards who destroy themselves. O Rome, thou conqueror of the world, what a race of cowards did thy empire produce! let Arria, Eponina, Lucretia, be of the number; they were women. But Brutus, Cassius, and thou great and divine Cato, who didst share with the Gods the adoration of an astonished world, thou whose sacred and august presence animated the Romans with holy zeal, and made tyrants tremble, little did thy proud admirers imagine that paltry rhetoricians, immured in the dusty corner of a college, would ever attempt to prove that thou wert a coward, for having preferred death to a shameful existence!

O the dignity and energy of your modern writers! how sublime, how intrepid are you with your pens? But tell me, thou great and valiant hero, who dost so courageously decline the battle, in order to endure the pain of living somewhat longer;—when a spark of fire lights upon your hand, why do you withdraw it in such haste? how? are you such a coward that you dare not bear the scorching of fire? nothing, you say, can oblige you to endure the burning spark;—and what obliges me to endure life? was the creation of a man of more difficulty to Providence than that of a straw? and is not both one and the other equally the work of his hands?

[u] That our existence here may be miserable—that we may “wish” to die, are points readily granted. But that the conclusion is just—“therefore we may and ought to kill ourselves”—is strongly denied. This however is the conclusion, which all defenders of suicide aim at establishing.

[x] Nothing can be more false than this representation: neither let the reader mistake declamation for reasoning.

Without

Without doubt it is an evidence of great fortitude to bear with firmness the misery which we cannot shun; none but a fool, however, will voluntarily endure evils, which he can [y] avoid without a crime; and it is very often a great crime to suffer pain unnecessarily. He, who has not resolution to deliver himself from a miserable being by a speedy death, is like one, who would rather suffer a wound to mortify, than trust to a surgeon's knife for a cure. Come thou worthy — cut off this leg, which endangers my life. I will see it done without shrinking, and will give that hero leave to call me coward, who suffers his leg to mortify, because he dares not undergo the same operation.

I acknowledge that there are duties owing to others, the nature of which will not allow every man to dispose of his life; but, in return [z], how many are there, which give him a right to dispose of it? Let a magistrate, on whom the welfare of a nation depends, let a father of a family, who is bound to procure subsistence for his children, let a debtor, who might ruin his creditors, let these at all events discharge their duty; admitting a thousand other civil and domestic relations to oblige an honest and unfortunate man to support the misery of life, to avoid the greater evil of doing injustice; is it therefore, under circumstances totally different, incumbent on us to preserve a life oppressed with a swarm of miseries, when it can be of no service but to him, who has not courage to die? “ Kill me, my child, says the decrepit savage to his son, who “ carries him on his shoulders, and bends under his weight; the enemy is at “ hand; go to battle with thy brethren; go and preserve thy children, and do “ not suffer thy helpless father to fall alive into the hands of those, whose relations he has mangled.” Though hunger, sickness, and poverty, those domestic plagues, more dreadful than savage enemies, may allow a wretched cripple to consume in a sick bed the provisions of a family, which can scarce subsist itself; yet he, who has no connexions, whom Heaven has reduced to the necessity of living alone, whose wretched existence can produce no good, why should not he, at least, have the right of quitting a station, where his complaints are troublesome, and his sufferings of no benefit?

[y] “ Without a crime :”—here hangs all the difference between us.

[z] See all that follows answered in Chapters of Offence against God, Society and Self, Part II. and on Christianity, Part III. and Hume, Part VI. C. ii.

Weigh

Weigh these considerations, my Lord; collect these arguments, and you will find, that they may be reduced to the most simple of nature's rights, of which no man of sense ever yet entertained a doubt. In fact, why should we be allowed to cure ourselves of the gout, and not to get rid of the misery of life? do not both evils proceed from the same hand? to what purpose is it to say, that death is painful? are drugs agreeable to be taken? no, nature revolts at both. Let them prove therefore, that it is more justifiable to cure a transient disorder by the application of remedies, than to free ourselves from an incurable evil by putting an end to our lives; and let them show, how it can be less criminal to use the bark for a fever, than to take opium for the stone. If we consider the object in view, it is in both cases to free ourselves from painful sensations; if we regard the means, both one and the other are equally natural; if we consider the repugnance of our nature, it operates equally on both sides; if we attend to the will of Providence, can we struggle against any evil of which it is not the author? can we deliver ourselves from any torment, which the hand of God has not inflicted? what are the bounds which limit his power, and when is resistance lawful? are we then to make no alteration in the condition of things, because every thing is in the state he appointed? must we do nothing in this life, for fear of infringing his laws; or is it in our power to break them if we would? no, my Lord, the occupation of man is more great and noble. God did not give him life, that he should supinely remain in a state of constant inactivity. But he gave him freedom to act, conscience to will, and reason to choose, what is good. He has constituted him sole judge of all his actions. He has engraved this precept on his heart, Do whatever you conceive to be for your own good, provided you thereby do no injury to others. If my sensations tell me, that death is eligible, I resist his orders by an obstinate resolution to live; for, by making death desirable, he directs me to put an end to my being.

My Lord, I appeal to your wisdom and candour; what more infallible maxims can reason deduce from religion with respect to suicide? If Christians have adopted contrary tenets, they are neither drawn from the principles of religion, nor from the only sure guide, the Scriptures, but borrowed from the Pagan philosophers. Lactantius and Augustin, the first who propagated this new doctrine, of which Jesus Christ and his Apostles take no notice, ground their arguments entirely on the reasoning of Phædo, which I have already controverted;

verted ; so that the believers, who in this respect, think they are supported by the authority of the Gospel, are in fact only countenanced by the authority of Plato. In truth, where do we find, throughout the whole Bible, any law against suicide [A], or so much as a bare disapprobation of it? and is it not very unaccountable, that among the instances produced of persons who devoted themselves to death, we do not find the least word of improbation against examples of this kind? nay what is more, the instance of Samson's voluntary death is authorised by a miracle, by which he revenges himself of his enemies. Would this miracle have been displayed to justify a crime? and would this man, who lost his strength by suffering himself to be seduced by the allurements of a woman, have recovered it to commit an authorised crime, as if God himself would practise deceit on men?

Thou shalt do no murder, says the Decalogue;—what are we to infer from hence? If this commandment be to be taken literally, we must not destroy malefactors, or our enemies; and Moses, who put so many people to death, was a bad interpreter of his own precept. If there be any exceptions, certainly the first must be in favour of suicide, because it is exempt from any degree of violence [B] and injustice, the only two circumstances, which can make homicide criminal; and because nature moreover has in this respect, thrown sufficient obstacles in the way.

But still they tell us, we must patiently endure the evils which God inflicts, and make a merit of our sufferings. This application however of the maxims of Christianity, is very ill calculated to satisfy our judgment. Man is subject to a thousand troubles, his life is a complication of evils, and he seems to have been born only to suffer. Reason directs him to shun as many of these evils as he can avoid; and religion, which is never in contradiction to reason, approves of his endeavours. But how inconsiderable is the account of these evils, in

[A] See all these points considered in those Chapters, which treat of the subject, as affected by the precepts of Christianity, Part III.

[B] Is it not possible then to be violent and unjust against “ourselves,” as well as our neighbour? or do these obstacles, which nature places in the way, always prevent suicide? why then the necessity of this first exception in its favour?

comparison with those he is obliged to endure against his will? It is with respect to these, that a merciful God allows man to claim the merit of resistance; he receives the tribute he has been pleased to impose, as a voluntary homage, and he places our resignation in this life to our profit in the next. True repentance is derived from nature; if man endures whatever he is obliged to suffer, he does, in this respect, all that God requires of him; and if any one is so inflated with pride, as to attempt more, he is a madman, who ought to be confined, or an impostor, who ought to be punished. Let us therefore without scruple fly from all the evils we can avoid; there will be still too many left for us to endure. Let us without remorse quit life itself, when it becomes a torment to us, since it is in our own power to do it, and that in so doing we neither offend God nor man. If we would offer a sacrifice to the supreme Being, is it nothing to undergo death? let us devote to God that which he demands by the voice of reason, and let us peaceably surrender our souls into his hands.

Such are the liberal precepts which good sense dictates to every man, and which religion authorises. Let us apply these precepts to ourselves. You have condescended to disclose your mind to me; I am acquainted with your uneasiness; you do not endure less than myself; and your troubles, like mine, are incurable; and they are the more remediless, as the laws of honour are more immutable than those of fortune. You bear them, I must confess, with fortitude. Virtue supports you; advance but one step further, and she disengages you. You intreat me to suffer; my Lord, I dare importune you to put an end to your sufferings; and I leave you to judge, which of us is most dear to the other.

Why should we delay doing that which we must do at last? shall we wait till old age and decrepit baseness attach us to life, after they have robbed it of its charms, and till we are doomed to drag an infirm and decrepit body with labour, ignominy, and pain? We are at an age when the soul has vigour to disengage itself with ease from its shackles, and when a man knows how to die as he ought; when further advanced in years, he suffers himself to be torn from life, which he quits with reluctance. Let us take advantage of this time, when the tedium of life makes death desirable; and let us tremble for fear it should come in all its horrors, at the moment when we could wish to avoid it. I re-

member the time when I prayed to Heaven only for a single hour of life, and when I should have died in despair if it had not been granted. Ah! what a pain it is to burst asunder the ties, which attach our hearts to this world, and how advisable it is to quit life the moment the connexion is broken! I am sensible, my Lord, that we are both worthy of a purer mansion; virtue points it out, and destiny invites us to seek it. May the friendship, which unites us, preserve our union to the latest hour! O what a pleasure for two sincere friends voluntarily to end their days in each others arms, to intermingle their latest breaths, and at the same instant to give up the soul, which they shared in common! What pain, what regret can infect their last moments? What do they quit by taking leave of the world? They go together; they quit nothing."

Answer. By Lord B——.

"Thou art distracted, my friend, by a fatal passion; be more discreet; do not give counsel, whilst you stand so much in need of advice. I have known greater evils than yours, but I am armed with fortitude of mind; I am an Englishman, and not afraid to die; but I know how to live and suffer as becomes a man. I have seen death near at hand, and have viewed it with too much indifference to go in search of it.—It is true, I thought you might be of use to me; my affection stood in need of yours; your endeavours might have been serviceable to me; your understanding might have enlightened me in the most important concern of my life; if I do not avail myself of it, to whom are you to impute it? Where is it? What is become of it? What are you capable of? Of what use can you be in your present condition? What service can I expect from you? A senseless grief renders you stupid and unconcerned. Thou art no man; thou art nothing; and if I did not consider what thou mightest be, I cannot conceive any thing more abject.

There is need of no other proof than your letter itself. Formerly I could discover in you good sense and truth. Your sentiments were just, your reflections proper, and I liked you not only from judgment but choice; for I considered your influence as an additional motive to excite me to the study of wisdom. But what do I perceive now in the arguments of your letter, with which you appear to be so highly satisfied? A wretched and perpetual sophistry, which

in the erroneous deviations of your reason shows the disorder of your mind, and which I would not stoop to refute, if I did not commiserate your delirium.

To subvert all your reasoning with one word, I would only ask you a single question. You, who believe in the existence of a God, in the immortality of the soul, and in the free-will of man, you surely cannot suppose that an intelligent being is embodied, and stationed on the earth by accident only, to exist, to suffer, and to die. It is certainly [c] most probable, that the life of man is not without some design, some end, some moral object. I intreat you to give me a direct answer to this point; after which we will deliberately examine your letter, and you will blush to have written it.

But let us wave all general maxims, about which we often hold violent disputes, without adopting any of them in practice; for in their applications we always find some particular circumstances, which make such an alteration in the state of things, that every one thinks himself dispensed from submitting to the rules, which he prescribes to others; and it is well known, that every man who establishes general principles deems them obligatory on all the world, himself excepted. Once more let us speak to you in particular.

You believe that you have a right to put an end to your being. Your proof is of a very singular nature; "because I am disposed to die, say you, I have a "right to destroy myself." This is certainly a very convenient argument for villains of all kinds: they ought to be very thankful to you for the arms with which you have furnished them; there can be no crimes, which, according to your arguments, may not be justified by the temptation to perpetrate them; and as soon as the impetuosity of passion shall prevail over the horror of guilt, their disposition to do evil will be considered as a right to commit it.

Is it lawful for you therefore to quit life? I should be glad to know, whether you have yet begun to live? What! was you placed here on earth to do nothing in this world? Did not Heaven, when it gave you existence, give you some task or employment? If you have accomplished your day's work before evening,

[c] See these points laid open at large in Part II. C. ii. Of the offence of Suicide against God.

rest yourself for the remainder of the day, you have a right to do it; but let us see your work. What answer are you prepared to make the supreme Judge, when he demands an account of your time? Tell me, what can you say to Him? —I have seduced a virtuous girl: I have forsaken a friend in distress. Thou unhappy wretch! point out to me that “just” man, who can boast that he has lived long enough; let me learn from “him,” in what manner I ought to have spent my days, to be at liberty to quit life.

You enumerate the evils of human nature. You are not ashamed to exhaust common-place topics, which have been hacknied over an hundred times:—and you conclude, that life is an evil. But search, examine into the order of things, and see, whether you can find any good, which is not intermingled with evil. Does it therefore follow, that there is no good in the universe, and can you confound what is in its own nature evil, with that which is only an evil accidentally?—You have confessed yourself, that the transitory and passive life of man is of no consequence, and only bears respect to matter from which he will soon be disencumbered; but his active and moral life, which ought to have most influence over his nature, consists in the exercise of free-will. Life is an evil to a wicked man in prosperity, and a blessing [D] to an honest man in distress: for it is not its casual modification, but its relation to some final object, which makes it either good or bad. After all, what are these cruel torments, which force you to abandon life? Do you imagine, that under your affected impartiality in the enumeration of the evils of this life, I did not discover that you was ashamed to mention your own? Trust me, and do not at once abandon every virtue. Preserve at least your wonted sincerity, and speak thus openly to your friend; “I have lost all hope of seducing a modest woman, I am “ obliged therefore to be a man of virtue; I had much rather die.”

You are weary of living; and you tell me, that life is an evil. Sooner or later you will receive consolation, and then you will say, life is a blessing. You will speak with more truth, though not with better reason; for nothing will have altered but yourself. Begin the alteration then from this day; and, since all the evil you lament is in the disposition of your mind, correct your irre-

[D] This observation is just and true, and ever worthy of being remembered.

gular appetites, and do not set your house on fire to avoid the trouble of putting it in order.

I endure misery, you say. Is it in my power to avoid suffering? But this is changing the state of the question: for the subject of inquiry is, not whether you suffer, but whether your life is an evil? Let us proceed. You are wretched, you naturally endeavour to extricate yourself from misery. Let us see whether for that purpose it be necessary to die.—Let us for a moment examine the natural tendency of the afflictions of the mind, as in direct opposition to the evils of the body, the two substances being of a contrary nature. The latter become worse and more inveterate the longer they continue, and at length utterly destroy this mortal machine. The former on the contrary bring only external and transitory modifications of an immortal and uncompounded essence, are insensibly effaced, and leave the mind in its original form, which is not susceptible of alteration. Grief, disquietude, regret, and despair, are evils of short duration, which never take root in the mind; and experience always falsifies that bitter reflection, which makes us imagine our misery will have no end. I will go further; I cannot imagine that the vices which contaminate us, are more inherent in our nature than the troubles we endure; I not only believe that they perish with the body which gives them birth, but I think beyond all doubt, that a longer life would be sufficient to reform mankind, and that many ages of youth would teach us that nothing is preferable to virtue.

However this may be, as the greatest part of our physical evils are incessantly increasing, the acute pains of the body, when they are incurable [E], may justify a man's destroying himself; for all his faculties being distracted with pain, and the evil being without remedy, he has no longer any use either of his will or of his reason; he ceases to be a man before he is dead, and does nothing more in taking away his life, than quit a body which encumbers him, and in which his soul is no longer resident.

[E] We must beg Lord B.'s or Rousseau's pardon here, if he means to insinuate, that a man under a painful and incurable disorder may be justified in killing himself:—since it is then, that the consolations of religion take place, holding forth the rewards of patience and submission to the divine will.

But

But it is otherwise with the afflictions of the mind, which, let them be ever so acute, always carry their remedy with them. In fact, what is it that makes any evil intolerable? Nothing but its duration. The operations of surgery are generally much more painful than the disorders they cure; but the pain occasioned by the latter is lasting, that of the operation is momentary, and therefore preferable. What occasion is there therefore for any operation to remove troubles, which die of course by their duration, the only circumstance which could render them insupportable? Is it reasonable to apply such desperate remedies to evils which expire of themselves? To a man who values himself on his fortitude, and who estimates years at their real value, of two ways by which he may extricate himself from the same troubles, which will appear preferable, death or time? Have patience and you will be cured. What would you desire more!

O, you will say, it doubles my afflictions to reflect that they will cease at last! This is the vain sophistry of grief! an apothegm void of reason, of propriety, and perhaps of sincerity. What an absurd motive of despair is the hope of terminating misery! Even allowing this fantastical reflection, who would not choose to increase the present pain for a moment, under the assurance of putting an end to it, as we scarify a wound in order to heal it? and admitting any charm in grief, to make us in love with suffering, when we release ourselves from it by putting an end to our being, do we not at that instant incur all that we apprehend hereafter?—Reflect thoroughly, young man, what are ten, twenty, thirty years, in comparison with immortality? Pain and pleasure pass like a shadow; life slides away in an instant; it is nothing of itself; its value depends on the use we make of it. The good that we have done is all that remains, and it is that alone which marks its importance.

Wherefore do not say any more, that your existence is an evil, since it depends on yourself to make it a blessing; and if it be an evil to have lived, this is an additional reason for prolonging life. Do not pretend neither to say any more that you are at liberty to die; for it is as much as to say, that you have power to alter your nature, that you have a right to revolt against the author of your being, and to frustrate the end of your existence. But when you add, that your death does injury to no one, do you recollect, that you make this
decla-

declaration to your friend?—Your death does injury to no one? I understand you. You think the loss I shall sustain by your death of no importance; you deem my affliction of no consequence. I will urge to you no more the rights of friendship, which you despise; but are there not obligations still more dear, which ought to induce you to preserve your life? If there be a person in the world, who loved you to that degree as to be unwilling to survive you, and whose happiness depends on yours, do you think that you have no obligations to her? Will not the execution of your wicked design disturb the peace of a mind, which has been with such difficulty restored to its former innocence? Are not you afraid to add fresh torments to an heart of such sensibility? Are not you apprehensive lest your death should be attended with a loss more fatal, which would deprive the world and virtue itself of its brightest ornament? And if she should survive you, are not you afraid to rouse up remorse in her bosom, which is more grievous to support than life itself? Thou ungrateful friend! thou indelicate lover! wilt thou be always taken up wholly with thyself? Wilt thou always think on thy own troubles alone? Hast thou no regard for the happiness of one, who was so dear to thee? and canst thou not resolve to live for her, who was willing to die for thee?

You talk of the duties of a magistrate, and of a father of a family; and because you are not under those circumstances, you think yourself absolutely free. And are you then under no obligations to society, to whom you are indebted for your preservation, your talents, your understanding? do you owe nothing to your native country, and to those unhappy people who may need your existence! O what an accurate calculation you make! Among the obligations you have enumerated, you have only omitted those of a man and of a citizen. Where is the virtuous patriot, who refused to enlist under a foreign prince, because his blood ought not to be spilt but in the service of his country; and who now, in a fit of despair, is ready to shed it against the express prohibition of the laws? The laws, the laws, young man! did any wise man ever despise them? Socrates though innocent, out of regard to them refused to quit his prison. You do not scruple to violate them by quitting life unjustly; and you ask, what injury do I?

You

You endeavour to justify yourself by example. You presume to mention the Romans.—“ You” talk of the Romans! it becomes you indeed to cite those illustrious names. Tell me, did Brutus die a lover in despair, and did Cato plunge the dagger in his breast for his mistress? Thou weak and abject man! what resemblance is there between Cato and thee? Show me the common standard between that sublime soul and thine. Ah vain wretch! hold thy peace: I am afraid to profane his name by a vindication of his conduct. At that august and sacred name every friend to virtue should bow to the ground, and honour the memory of the greatest hero in silence.

How ill you have selected your examples, and how meanly you judge of the Romans, if you imagine that they thought themselves at liberty to quit life so soon as it became a burden to them! Recur to the excellent days of that republic, and see, whether you will find a single citizen of virtue, who thus freed himself from the discharge of his duty, even after the most cruel misfortunes. When Regulus was on his return to Carthage, did he prevent the torments, which he knew were preparing for him, by destroying himself? What would not Posthumus have given, when obliged to pass under the yoke at Caudium, had this resource been justifiable? How much did even the senate admire that effort of courage, which enabled the consul Varro to survive his defeat? For what reason did so many generals voluntarily surrender themselves to their enemies, they, to whom ignominy was so dreadful, and who were so little afraid of dying? It was because they considered their blood, their life, and their latest breath, as devoted to their country; and neither shame nor misfortune could dissuade them from this sacred duty. But when the laws were subverted, and the state became a prey to tyranny, the citizens resumed their natural liberty, and the right they had over their own lives. When Rome [F] was no more, it was lawful for the Romans to give up their lives; they had discharged their duties on earth, they had no longer any country to defend, they were therefore at liberty to dispose of their lives, and to obtain that freedom for themselves, which they could not recover for their country. After having spent their days in the service of expiring Rome, and in fighting for the defence of its laws, they died great and virtuous as they had lived, and their death was an additional tribute

[F] This is arguing entirely on stoical principles. But for a full account of Roman suicide, see Part-IV. C. vii.

to the glory of the Roman name, since none of them beheld a sight above all others most dishonourable, that of a true citizen stooping to an usurper. But thou, what art thou? what hast thou done? dost thou think to excuse thyself on account of thy obscurity? does thy weakness exempt thee from thy duty, and because thou hast neither rank nor distinction in thy country, art thou less subject to the laws? It becomes you vastly to presume to talk of dying, while you owe the service of your life to your equals. Know, that a death, such as you meditate, is shameful and surreptitious. It is a theft committed on mankind in general. Before you quit life, return the benefits you have received from every individual. But, say you, I have no attachments; I am useless in the world. O thou young philosopher! art thou ignorant that thou canst not move a single step without finding some duty to fulfil; and that every man is useful to society, even by means of his existence alone?

Hear me, thou rash young man! Thou art dear to me; I commiserate thy errors. If the least sense of virtue still remain in thy breast, attend, and let me teach thee to be reconciled to life. Whenever thou art tempted to quit it, say to thyself—"Let me do at least one good action before I die." Then go in search for one in a state of indigence, whom thou mayest relieve; for one under misfortunes, whom thou mayest comfort; for one under oppression, whom thou mayest defend. Introduce to me those unhappy wretches, whom my rank keeps at a distance. Do not be afraid of misusing my purse or my credit; make free with them; distribute my fortune; make me rich. If this consideration restrain you to-day, it will restrain you to-morrow; if to-morrow, it will restrain you all your life. If it have no power to restrain you,—die; you are below my care."

The refutation of what argument is contained in the first of these letters, has appeared in various parts of this inquiry; and as to the declamatory part, it is pleasing to find, in the second letter, an home-answer and application to the immediate circumstances of the intended suicide: since it is so true, that we scarce ever apply general propositions to our own use; esteeming them good maxims for the regulation of other people's conduct, but always finding some loop-hole or evasion for our own situation. But notwithstanding the immediate design of this answer, in applying to the heart and feelings of St. Prieux, as

a friend and a lover, it is also very generally applicable to all such, as being under the influence of any impetuous and unrestrained passion, first determine on their own self-murder, and then seek to justify it on rational principles; as if the judgment could then be free and unbiassed enough to form a disinterested conclusion; as if reason had any thing to do with the decision of the passions. The advice is also excellent that is given at the conclusion of Lord B.'s letter "Whenever thou art tempted to quit life, say to thyself—" Let me do at least "one good action before I die"—and then search out an object, whom thou "mayest benefit in some shape or other." If this consideration (as he observes) restrain one, who is meditating his own destruction to-day, it will restrain him to-morrow, it will restrain him to the end of his natural life.

Voltaire has given us some reflections on our subject in the following manner. After having cited some English examples [F] of suicide, and having given it as his opinion, that, notwithstanding what is generally thought, Paris affords as many instances of this folly as London, he goes on—"All that I will venture "to say is, that there is no great danger, lest this infatuation should ever be- "come epidemical. Nature has taken care to keep it in due bounds. Hope "and fear are two powerful agents ready to stop the hands of suicide. It is "to no purpose to tell us [G] of countries, where a council was established to "grant the citizens a permission to kill themselves, on hearing their reasons "for it. I either doubt the fact, or believe the magistrates had very little business. There is one thing appears a little more extraordinary on this subject, which in my opinion merits an attentive inquiry. The ancient heroes, "both Greek and Roman, in their respective civil wars, frequently practised

[F] Colonel Mordaunt's referred to in a Note, Part V. C. v. and Smith the bookseller's, which will be noticed hereafter.—See Voltaire's Works, Vol. IV. 8vo. premiere edition; under title *Mélanges de Littérature, d'Histoire et de Philosophie*.

[G] The authorities for these matters have been given in their proper places: (see Part IV. C. vi. about Cæans, Massilians, &c.) and it is left entirely with the reader to judge, as he pleases, of their authenticity. But the opinions of those times (which certainly made a boast and merit of forestalling nature on many occasions) being taken into consideration, there seems no great improbability in the matter of establishing such a law, though perhaps it was little regarded.—The only idea that could make an application to the magistrate necessary to have been enforced by law, must have arisen from the "frequency" of suicide, which rendered it necessary to put its commission under some regulations, as to the sort of it that should be deemed innocent and honourable.

" suicide;

“ suicide ; and yet in the commotions of modern Europe, I mean those of the
 “ League in France, and the Guelph and Gibeline confusion in Italy, we do
 “ not find one chief, who killed himself. I own that these last were Chris-
 “ tians, and that the principles of a catholic warrior and a pagan hero are widely
 “ different. But I want to know, why these christian generals, whom their
 “ religion withheld from destroying their own lives, made no scruple of poi-
 “ soning, assassinating, or beheading their enemies ? Are not such actions as
 “ contrary to christianity, as suicide itself ? To resume the argument. How
 “ comes it, that Brutus, Cato, Cassius, Antony, Otho, and many others, died
 “ so resolutely by their own hands, whilst our modern heroes have been led to
 “ execution, or languished out life in a tedious imprisonment ? Some pretend
 “ to say, that these ancients wanted true courage [H] ; that Cato acted like a
 “ coward, and that it would have been more heroic for him to have submitted
 “ to Cæsar. These thoughts may do in an ode, or serve to embellish an ora-
 “ tion : but it is certain, that a violent death calmly determined on, is so far
 “ from being a mark of pusillanimity, that it is a victory over nature. Such
 “ an action is a proof of courage, not of weakness. When a man falls into a
 “ phrensy, we do not say he is feeble, but that his strength is supernatural, and
 “ the effect of his disease. The pagan religion forbade [I] suicide as expressly
 “ as the christian. By their mythology there was a particular place of punish-
 “ ment assigned to those, who were criminal this way, as appears from the pas-
 “ sage [K] in Virgil, “ Proxima deinde tenent,” &c. Such was the fate of
 “ suicide according to the pagan religion, and yet in spite of the infernal pe-
 “ nalties it denounced, it was reckoned a point of honour to die this way : so
 “ contradictory sometimes are the manners of men to their principles. Thus
 “ duelling is unhappily creditable among us, though equally repugnant to

[H] See the matter of courage in suicide fully discussed in Part I. Chap. iv.

[I] Not so generally or clearly, as may be seen in chapter on Christianity, Part III. C. i.

[K] See a full criticism on this passage, Part IV. C. iv. wherein it is attempted to prove, that Virgil does not mean to censure suicide as an heinous crime ; which appears both from the company in which he has placed suicides, viz. infants and persons unjustly condemned ; and from the situation he has allotted them, which is not in Tartarus itself, but only on the further banks of the Styx.—Voltaire therefore takes too much for granted here of its heinous punishment ; as also when he would infer, that what was deemed even an honourable suicide in ancient times was in reality equally punishable under the maxims of their religion, as a Christian’s would be under his.

“ our religion, and forbidden by reason and by our laws. If Cato and Cæsar,
 “ Antony and Augustus, did not decide their quarrels this way, it was not be-
 “ because they had less courage than our French heroes. If the Duke of
 “ Montmorency, the Marechals of Marillac de Thou or St. Mars, chose ra-
 “ ther to be led to execution, like highwaymen, than kill themselves, like
 “ Brutus and Cassius, it does not follow they had less fortitude or sense of
 “ honour than the Romans. The true reason is, that suicide was then the
 “ fashion at Rome, and beheading was the mode at Paris. The women on the
 “ coasts of Malabar and Coromandel burn themselves on their husbands’ fu-
 “ neral piles. Have they more resolution than Cornelia or the Roman ma-
 “ trons? No; but it is the custom of that country for the women to expose
 “ themselves to the flames that consume their husbands.”—It cannot admit of
 a doubt, but that fashion and custom support a powerful and prevailing faction
 against the practical influence and exertion of good principles. It is a pleasure
 however to think, that suicide is not yet made a point of honour, or held in
 public estimation among us. But as its practice is certainly much increasing, it
 behoves every one to set his face against all attempts at its defence, and to brand
 the growing monster with every mark of infamy and reprobation.

The author of an “ Essay on Crimes and Punishments”—the Marquis Bec-
 caria of Milan, has a short chapter (C. xxxii.) on the punishment of suicide.
 “ Suicide (says this noble writer) is a crime, which seems not to admit of pu-
 “ nishment properly speaking; for it cannot be inflicted but on the innocent,
 “ or upon an insensible dead body. In the first case, it is unjust and tyran-
 “ nical; for political liberty supposes all punishments entirely personal; and in
 “ the second, it has the same effect by way of example, as the scourging of a
 “ statue. Mankind love life too well; and the objects that surround them,
 “ the seducing phantom of pleasure and hope, that sweetest error of mortals,
 “ which makes men swallow such large draughts of evil mingled with a very
 “ few drops of good, allure them too strongly to apprehend, that this crime
 “ will ever be common from its unavoidable impunity. The laws are obeyed
 “ through fear of punishment, but death destroys all sensibility. What mo-
 “ tive then can restrain the desperate hand of suicide?—He, who kills himself,
 “ does a less injury to society, than he, who quits his country for ever; since
 “ the former leaves his property behind him, but the latter carries with
 “ him

“ him at least a part of his substance. Besides ; as the strength of a society
 “ consists in the number of citizens, he, who quits one nation to reside in
 “ another, becomes a double loss. This then is the question ; whether it be
 “ advantageous to society, that its members should enjoy the unlimited privi-
 “ lege of migration ?—Every law that is not armed with force, or which from
 “ circumstances must be ineffectual, should not be promulgated. Opinion,
 “ which reigns over the minds of men, obeys the slow and indirect impressions
 “ of the legislator, but resists them when violently and directly applied ; and
 “ useless laws communicate their insignificance to the most salutary, which are
 “ regarded more as obstacles to be surmounted, than as safeguards of the public
 “ good. But further ; our perceptions being limited, by enforcing the observ-
 “ ance of laws, which are evidently useless, we destroy the influence of the
 “ most salutary. From this principle a wise dispenser of public happiness may
 “ draw some useful consequences ; the explanation of which would carry me
 “ too far from my subject, which is to prove the inutility of making the na-
 “ tion a prison.” The author then goes on to advance many arguments against
 the utility and expediency, as well as even the possibility of appointing an effec-
 tual punishment of migration ; from whence he infers the weakness of attempt-
 ing it. “ Make it (he says) but in a small degree pleasant and profitable to a
 “ citizen to abide in his own country, and his natural love of it will more ef-
 “ fectually keep him in it than all coercive and legal restraints against his mi-
 “ gration.” This is certainly true. But it is not necessary to follow him through
 his arguments on the vanity and injustice of laws against migration, because,
 even allowing them all the force their proposer wishes, yet the two subjects of
 migration and suicide do not seem so closely connected, as that what proves the
 absurdity of making laws against the one applies equally to the other ; which is
 the conclusion drawn by this writer. “ For if it be demonstrated (says he) that
 “ the laws, which imprison men in their own country, are vain and unjust, it
 “ will be equally true of those, which punish suicide ; for that can only be pu-
 “ nished after death, which is in the power of God alone ; but it is no crime
 “ with regard to [L] man, because the punishment falls on an innocent family.

“ If

[L] Dr. John Jebb was also of this opinion, as appears from his *Maxims*, where he says ; “ Suicide
 “ is not a crime, which should be deemed cognizable by the civil magistrate ; but it is a sinful and
 “ vicious action, because it implies a want of trust in the goodness of Providence, and indicates the
 “ greatest

“ If it be objected, that the consideration of such a punishment may prevent
 “ the crime, I answer—that he, who can calmly renounce the pleasure of ex-
 “ istence, who is so weary of life, as to brave the idea of eternal misery, will
 “ never be influenced by the more distant and less powerful considerations of
 “ family and children.”

The inexpediency of punishing suicide on the innocent family has been shown at large (Part V. Chap. iii.); the impossibility of personal punishment needs not a mention; but it does not follow from these premises, that the rights of society are not injured, as well as the laws of God; or that the state, because it cannot strictly speaking punish the criminal, is therefore to take no notice of his crime, or not to brand it with every mark of public abhorrence, detestation, and infamy, for the sake of example to others.

Neither is it so clear, “ that he, who kills himself, does a less injury to society than he, who quits his country for ever.”—He leaves indeed his property behind him, and he does not give his personal service to another nation:—but is [M] not the “ principle,” which encourages him to suicide of more dangerous consequence to the good order and peace of society, than the property or personal service of any individual? This principle probably led him to a course of vicious actions through life, and to close that life in a manner, which gives encouragement to others to commit the like?—But allowing migration in its full extent, and that every man is at full liberty to live in what country he likes best, and that it is unjust to punish him for so doing; yet this liberty of living where he pleases cannot be extended to his living nowhere at all, or depriving himself altogether of life. This is quite a different case. Life

“ greatest degree of self-regard. Hence frequent in lunacy; where self-regards seem to annihilate all
 “ secondary affections, such as modesty, piety, benevolence.”—Jebb's Theological Propositions, &c.
 in his Works, Vol. II. P. 138.

But as it is a crime, whose “ principle” is so immediately dangerous to the interests of society, the civil magistrate is surely bound to do all in his power to signify his censure and reprobation of its practice.—“ For if (according to Montesquieu in the Persian Letters) the necessity of preserving our own
 “ lives, be a better security of human actions, the punishment of suicide may be made a civil law.”

[M] See the pernicious consequences of the “ principle” of suicide exposed at large in Part II. C. iii.—and also more on migration in the same chapter.

itself is the station not to be quitted; and for the doing of which the reprobation of mankind is due, as it is a desertion of the first and general interests of "all" society:—the cases of migration and suicide are therefore widely different.

In a Commentary annexed to Beccaria's Essay, and ascribed by the English translator to Voltaire, is the following chapter. (C. xix.)—"The celebrated Du Verger de Hauranne, Abbé de St. Cyran, one of the founders of the Port Royal, wrote a treatise on suicide in the year 1608, which is become one of the scarcest books [N] in Europe. "The decalogue (says this writer) forbids us to commit murder; in which precept self-murder seems no less to be understood than the murder of another:—if therefore there be cases in which it is lawful to kill another, there may be cases also, wherein suicide may be allowed. But a man ought not to attempt his own life, till after having consulted his reason. Public authority, which is the representative of God, may dispose of our lives. The reason of man may also represent that of the Deity, it being a ray of eternal light."—St. Cyran extends this argument to a great length, which after all is a mere sophism. But when he comes to exemplify, he is not quite so easily answered. "A man may kill himself (he says, for the good of his prince, for the good of his country, or for the good of his parents."—It does not appear, that we could with justice condemn a Codrus, or a Curtius. What prince would dare to punish the family of a man, who had sacrificed himself for his service? or rather, is there any prince, who would dare not to reward them? St. Thomas Aquinas, before St. Cyran, said the same thing. But there was no need either of Thomas, of Bonaventure, or of Hauranne to inform us, that a man, who dies for his country deserves our praise.

"St. Cyran concludes, "that it is lawful to do for one's own sake, that which is praise-worthy, if done for another." The arguments of Plutarch, of Seneca, of Montagne, and an hundred others, are well known. I do not pretend to apologize for an action, which the laws have condemned: but I

[N] The title of this book is, "Question royale où est montré en quelle extrémité, principalement en temps de paix, le sujet pourrir être obligé de conserver la vie du Prince aux dépens de la sienne."—See Encyclopédie—Article Suicide.

“ do not recollect, that either the Old or New Testament forbid a man to re-
 “ linquish his life, when it is no longer supportable. By the Roman laws
 “ suicide was not forbidden ; on the contrary, in a law of Mark Antony, which
 “ was never repealed, we find it thus written. “ If your brother or your fa-
 “ ther, being convicted of no crime, has put himself to death, either to avoid
 “ pain, or being weary of life, or from despair, or madness, his will shall ne-
 “ vertheless be valid, or his heirs inherit according to law.” Notwithstanding
 “ this humane law of our ancient masters, we ordain, that a stake shall be
 “ driven through the corpse of the offender, and his memory become infamous.
 “ We do all in our power to dishonour his family. We punish a son for
 “ having lost his father, and a widow, because she is deprived of her husband.
 “ We even confiscate the effects of the deceased, and rob the living of that
 “ which is justly their due. This custom, with many others, is derived from
 “ our canon law, which denies christian burial to those, who are guilty of
 “ suicide ; concluding thence, that it is not lawful to inherit on earth from one,
 “ who has himself no inheritance in heaven. The canon law assures us, that
 “ Judas committed a greater crime in hanging himself than in betraying his
 “ master.”—There seems to be nothing advanced by St. Cyran, or by the au-
 thor of this commentary, which has not been noticed under different heads in
 a variety of places ; and therefore nothing more need be added here but an ob-
 servation, that, though our just compassion for the innocent sufferings of a fa-
 mily may make us earnestly wish, that the mode of punishing suicide were al-
 tered, yet it cannot from hence be concluded, that it deserves not every censure
 and reprobation, with which it is in the power of a legislature to brand its
 practice.

It is necessary to mention one aphorism of an ingenious suicide, because,
 though short, it contains much mischief and encouragement of this odious
 practice.—“ Eustace Budgel” was a man of much literary fame at the beginning
 of the present century ; the relation and friend of Addison, and a distinguished
 writer in the periodical publications [o] of that day. He was born to a good
 fortune, and held a considerable place under government, whilst Addison lived,
 who kept him in some order as to his political character. But having lost all

[o] Budgel's Papers in the Spectator have the signature X ; and in the Guardian an Asterisk.

court-favour after Addison's decease, and being a man of great expence and vanity; having also sunk a large sum of money in the South-Sea scheme, and having involved himself in a number of fruitless litigations, he became highly distressed in his circumstances. This added to the chagrin of disappointed ambition, and to other matters, determined him [P] to make away with himself. He had always thought but lightly of revelation, and after Addison's death became an avowed free-thinker; which laxity of principle strongly concurred in disposing him to adopt this fatal resolution. Accordingly after having been visibly agitated and almost distracted for several days, he took a boat, and ordered the waterman to go through London-bridge. While the boat was under the bridge, Budgel threw himself overboard, having had the previous caution to fill his pockets with stones. This happened in the year 1737. It was said to have been Budgel's opinion, "that when life becomes uneasy to support and is overwhelmed with clouds and sorrows, man has a natural right to deprive himself of it, as it is better not to live than to live in pain." A man of unsettled principles easily persuades himself into this notion, when he is actually suffering from some violence of his passions, even though he had not imbibed it before. For whenever the passions attempt to reason, it is only on the delusive suggestions of their own perturbed feelings.—The morning before Budgel carried his deadly intentions into execution, he endeavoured to persuade his daughter to accompany him in his death. His only argument to her was, that her life was not worth holding;—but she thought otherwise, and refused to concur in the sacrifice.

But what gave occasion to the introduction of this short account of Budgel was a slip of paper, which he left on his writing-table, containing these few words as an apology for his rash action—

"What Cato did, and Addison approved,

"Cannot be wrong."

[P] "We talked of a man's drowning himself. Johnson said, "I should never think it time to make away with myself."—I (Boswel) put the case of Eustace Budgel, who was accused of forging a bill, and who sunk himself in the Thames before the trial of its authenticity came on. Suppose, Sir, said I, (Boswel) that a man is absolutely sure he shall be detected in a fraud, the consequence of which will be utter disgrace and expulsion from society?—(Johnson) "Then, Sir, let him go abroad to a distant country; let him go to some place, where he is not known. Do not let him go to the devil, where he is known."—Boswel's Tour with Johnson to the Hebrides, p. 50.

This was in allusion to Addison's having written the tragedy of Cato; and it is an insidious remark, which has been caught up by many a suicide since the days of Budgel, to justify his own murder. But what did Cato do? that is, on what principles did he act? This is a question seldom discussed by the empasioned self-assassin, who madly thinks he is imitating Cato, because he is pointing his sword at his own breast. Did Cato spend the gifts of fortune in parade, vanity, and law-suits, and then quit life in a moment of chagrin and merited poverty? Did Cato persuade his child [Q] to accompany him out of life, because life was not worth his keeping? How then could a Budgel pretend to palliate his own murder by the example of Cato? or how can any vicious or frantic suicide, who repeats this sentence after him, commit such an outrage on common sense and decency, as to join his own name with that of an expiring Cato? How ungenerous also of Budgel, how traitorous to the memory of his deceased friend, thus to introduce his name with an insinuation, that his opinion was favourable to the cause of suicide! it being a practice, which from the whole tenour of the life and writings of the amiable and christian Addison, he must have utterly reprobated.

But what after all did Addison approve?—not the self-murder even of a Cato: which evidently appears from the words he has put into the mouth of his dying hero.

“ I am sick to death—O when shall I get loose
 “ From this vain world, the abode of guilt and sorrow!
 “ And yet methinks a beam of light breaks in
 “ On my departing soul:—alas I fear
 “ I have been too hasty! O ye Powers, that search
 “ The heart of man, and weigh his inmost thoughts,
 “ If I have done amiss, impute it not!—
 “ The best may err, but you are good, and——(dies).”

The poet discovered in the character of Cato, one of the most complete and perfect examples in antiquity of private manners, as well as of exertion of public spirit; and such a character was well worthy to be held forth to the sons

[Q] Cato advised his son and his friends to live, and to throw themselves on the clemency of Cæsar.

of

of Britain for their imitation at that [R] alarming period, in which the tragedy of Cato made its first public appearance, and met with such uncommon and deserved applause. As to the mode of Cato's death, the poet was obliged to stick to historic truth; but the licence of dramatic representation gave some scope to its little [S] attendant circumstances. These therefore are somewhat varied from what is generally recorded of him, for the better instruction of an English and Christian audience; and accordingly he takes the liberty of making Cato himself confess in the most delicate touches, that in the last exertions of his mental faculties——

———“ a beam of light breaks in
“ On his departing soul.”

But what does this ray of divine illumination produce? It first opens to his mind, that the merit of self-murder (which he had ever esteemed on the principles of his sect, an honourable mode of ceasing to live) might be of a suspicious and doubtful nature. The dying patriot's heart misgives him, lest he should have been impetuous and rash in his decision against his own life.

———“ alas I fear
“ I have been too hasty!”

Hence he dies with the words of mistrust and repentance in his mouth,

———“ O ye Powers, that search
“ The heart of man, and weigh his inmost thoughts,
“ If I have done amiss, impute it not!
“ The best may err, but ye are good.”

The delicacy and judgment of the poet in putting these words into the mouth of his dying hero is truly admirable. They at once express his own sentiments

[R] The tragedy of Cato was first published in the year 1713;—a very critical period with respect to English liberty, whose cause it was wonderfully calculated to promote.

[S] See the historic particulars of Cato's death in Chap. about him, Part IV. C. iv.

to be unfavourable towards Cato's self-murder, and warn a christian audience to avoid an imitation of his hero in this last action of his honest and virtuous life. It was left to the ingratitude of a Budgel so falsely and mischievously to interpret the sentiments of his great friend and benefactor, as if Addison meant in this tragedy to countenance and approve the suicide of Cato. However we see from hence, how fain vice would brood itself under the wing of virtue. How cautious then should every writer be, who has the interests of humanity and virtue at heart, in the choice of his subjects, lest he should seem to exalt the hero of his tragic tale in any point of his character, which, however consistent with the morality of his own times, is not so with that of ours! Many will quote and imitate the suicide of Cato, who are neither able nor willing to enter into a delineation of his private virtues or public spirit; and who are still less capable of distinguishing the delicacy and caution of Addison, when obliged to disclose the last scene of his life. How many inferior or less judicious writers would have filled the dying lips of Cato with the praises of liberty, with invectives against Cæsar, and encomiums on stoical suicide under such circumstances! But the judgment of Addison turned Cato's thoughts on a still more useful and moral point—a doubt of the propriety of what he had done. However it is much to be lamented, that so many of our English tragedies are replete with self-murder, without even the warnings of a stricture on the wickedness of its practice. It is generally made the close, not only of a perturbed and vicious life, but also of a virtuous and afflicted one. Hence its perpetrator gains the commiseration at least, if not the applause of the audience, who are by this means not only familiarized to the idea of suicide, and its very exhibition before their eyes, but taught to esteem it in many instances both innocent and respectable:—this is a defect in the morality of dramatic representations before a christian audience, which calls aloud [T] for correction.

[T] There are some excellent observations on what are supposed to be the moral effects of tragedy in a publication called "The Lounger," Vol. I. from which the following are extracts. "Scenes presenting passions and vices, round which the poet throws the veil of magnanimity, which he decorates with the pomp of verse, with the splendor of eloquence, familiarize the mind to their appearance, and take from it that natural disgust, which the crimes presented in their native form, would certainly excite. Cruelty, revenge, and murder, are often the attribute of the hero; for he must always be the hero, on whom the principal stress of the action lies. What punishment awaits, or what

what misfortunes attend his crimes, is little to the purpose; if the villain is the prominent figure of the piece, he will be the hero of the tragedy, as the robber, though he is about to be hanged, is the hero of the trial or the execution. But even of the nobler characters, does not the morality of sentiment often yield to the immorality of situation? Treachery is often the fruit of wisdom and of resolution; murder an exertion of valour; "and suicide the resource of virtuous affliction." It will be remembered, that it is not so much from what the hero says, as from what he does, that an impression is drawn. The repentant lines, which Cato speaks when he is dying, are never regarded. It is the dagger only we remember, that dagger by which he escaped from chains and purchased immortality.—It is the business of tragedy to exhibit the passions, that is, the weaknesses of men. Ancient tragedy showed them in a simple manner; virtue and vice were strongly and distinctly marked, wisdom and weakness were easily discriminated; and though vice might be sometimes palliated, and weakness excused, the spectator could always discover the character of each. But in the modern drama there is an uncertain sort of outline, a blended colouring, by which the distinction of these objects is frequently lost. The refinement of modern audiences calls for shades of character more delicate than those, which the stage formerly exhibited; the consequence is, that the bounds of right and wrong are often so uncertainly marked, as not to be easily distinguished; and if the powers of poetry, or the eloquence of sentiment, should be on the side of the latter, it will require a greater firmness of mind than youth or inexperience is master of to resist it. Reason condemns every sort of weakness; but passion, enthusiasm, and sickly sensibility, have dignified certain weaknesses with the name of "amiable;" and the young, of whom some are susceptible, and others affect susceptibility, think it often an honour to be subject to their control. In tragedy or tragic writing, they often find such characters for their imitation. Such characters being various, complicated, and fluctuating, are the most proper for tragedy. The poets have not neglected to avail themselves of that circumstance; their dramas are filled with such characters, who shift the hue and colour of their minds, according to the change of situation or the variety of incident; or sometimes, whose minds, in the hand of the poet, produce that change, and create that variety. Wisdom and virtue, simple, uniform, and unchanging, only superior artists can draw, and superior spectators enjoy. The high heroic virtue we see exemplified in tragedy warms the imagination and swells the mind; but being distant from the ordinary feelings and exertions of life, has, I suspect, but little influence upon the conduct. On the contrary, it may be fairly doubted, whether this play of the fancy, in the walks of virtue and benevolence, does not lessen the exertion of those qualities in practice and reality. "*Indocilis privata loqui*," said Lucan of Cæsar; so in some measure, he who is deeply conversant in the tragic phrase, in the swelling language of compassion, of generosity, and of love, finding no parallel in his common intercourse with mankind, will not so readily open his heart to the calls on his feeling, which the vulgar distresses of his fellow-creatures, or the ordinary relations of life, may occasion. In stage-misfortunes, in fancied sufferings, the drapery of the figure hides its form; and real distress, coming in an homely and unornamented state, disgusts the eye, which had poured its tears over the hero of tragic misery, or the martyr of romantic woe. Real calamity offends with its coarseness, and therefore is not produced on the scene, which exhibits in its stead the fantastic griefs of a delicate and high-wrought sensibility. Lillo, in his "*Fatal Discovery*," presented extreme poverty as the distress of the scene; and the moral of his piece was to inculcate, that poverty was not to be shunned, nor wealth pursued, at the expence of honesty and virtue. A modern audience did not relish a distress so real, but gave their tears to the widow of St. Valori, who was mad
for

for the loss of a husband killed twenty years before. From the same cause, "The Gamester," one of the best and most moral of our later tragedies, though successively represented by the greatest players, has never become popular. And even now the part of Mrs. Beverley (the first character of the first actresses in the world) is performed to indifferent houses.

The tragic poet is striving to distress his hero that he may move his audience; it is not his business to equalize the affliction to the evil that occasions it; the effect is what he is to exhibit, which he is to clothe in the flowing language of poetry, and the high colouring of imagination; and if the cause be not very disproportionate indeed, the reader or the spectator will not find fault with it. *Catalio* in the *Orphan* (a play so grossly immoral, that it were unfair in me to quote it, except as illustrative of this single argument) is mad with anguish and with rage, because his wife's maid refuses him access to her apartment according to the previous appointment they had made; and *Orosmane* in *Zayre* remains "immobile & sa langue glacée," because his bride begs him to defer their marriage for a day. Yet these were disappointments, which the lover of *Otway*, and much more the hero of *Voltaire*, might surely have borne with greater fortitude. If we are to apply all this in example, it seems to have a tendency to weaken our mind to our own sufferings, without opening it to the sufferings of others. The real evils, which the dignity of the scene hides from our view, are those, which we ought to pity in our neighbours; the fantastic and imaginary distresses, which it exhibits, are those we are apt to indulge in ourselves. Here then tragedy adds to the list of our calamities, without increasing the catalogue of our virtues.

As tragedy thus dignifies the distresses, so it elevates the actions of its personages, their virtues and their vices. But this removes virtue at a greater distance from us, and brings vice nearer; it exalts the first to a point beyond our imitation, and ennobles the latter to a degree above our abhorrence. "Modern tragedy (says a celebrated critic) has become more a school of virtue than the ancient, by being more the theatre of passion; an *Othello*, hurried by jealousy to murder his innocent wife; a *Jaffier*, ensnared by resentment and want to engage in a conspiracy, and then stung with remorse and involved in ruin; a *Siffredi*, through the deceit which he employs for public-spirited ends, bringing destruction on all whom he loved: these are the examples, which tragedy now displays, by means of which it inculcates on men the proper government of their passions." I am afraid, if we appeal to the feelings of the audience at the conclusion of any of those pieces, we shall not find the effect to be what is here supposed. *Othello* we rather pity for his jealousy, than hate as a murderer. With *Jaffier* and his associates we are undoubtedly leagued against the rulers of Venice; and even the faith and tenderness of *Belvidera* hardly make us forgive her for betraying their secret. The sentiments of *Siffredi*, however wise and just, are disregarded where they impeach the dignity and supereminency of love. His deceit indeed is blamed, which is said to be the moral of the piece; but it is blamed, because it hindered the union of *Tancred* and *Sigismunda*, which, from the very beginning of the play, is the object in which the reader or spectator is interested. Reverse the situation, make it a contrivance to defeat the claim of the tyrant's daughter, to give the throne to *Tancred*, and to place *Sigismunda* there at his side, the audience would admire its ingenuity, and rejoice in its success.

In the mixture of a plot, and amidst the variety of situations, where weaknesses are flattered and passions indulged, at the same time that virtues are displayed and duties performed, one set of readers will

will enjoy the pleasure of the first, while those only who have less need to be instructed will seize the instruction of the latter. When Marcus dies for his country, the ladies in the side-boxes only consider his death, as removing the bar to the marriage of Lucia with his brother Portius.—In tragedy, as in novel, which is sometimes a kind of tragedy, the author is obliged, in justification of weak characters, to elevate villainous ones, or to throw round their vices a bewitching address, and captivating manners. Lovelace is made a character, which the greater number of girls admire, in order to justify the seduction of Clarissa. Lothario, though very inferior, is something of the same cast, to mitigate the crime of Calista. The story would not be probable else:—granted:—but in proportion to the art of the writer in rendering it probable, he heightens the immoral effect of which I complain.

As the incidents must be formed, so must the sentiments be introduced, according to the character and condition of the person speaking them, not according to the laws of virtue, or the dictates of prudence. To give them this propriety, they must often be apologies for vice and for fraud, or contain ridicule against virtue and honesty. It is not sufficient to answer, that if the person uttering them be punished in the course, or at the end of the play, the expiation is sufficiently made; if the sentiments at the time be shrewdly imagined, and forcibly expressed, they will have a powerful effect on the mind, and leave impressions, which the retribution of poetical justice will hardly be able to efface. On poetical justice indeed I do not lay so much stress as some authors have done. I incline to be of the opinion of one of my predecessors, that we are frequently more roused to a love of virtue and an hatred of vice, where virtue is unfortunate and vice successful, than when each receives the recompence it merits. But I impute more to striking incidents, to the sentiments running through the tenour of a piece, than to the general impression of its denouement.

But it is not only from the vices or imperfections of tragic characters, that we are to fear the danger of familiarizing the approach of evil, or encouraging the growth of error. Their very virtues I fear are often dangerous to form the principles, or draw the imitation of their readers. Theirs are not so much the useful, the productive virtues (if I may be allowed the expression) of real life, as the shining and showy qualities, which attract the applause, or flatter the vanity of the unthinking. The extremity, the enthusiasm even of a laudable propensity, takes from its usefulness to others, and degenerates into a blind and headlong indulgence in the possessor. In the greatest part of modern tragedies, such are the qualities of the persons that are most in favour with the public. In what relates to passive excellence, prudence to avoid evils, or fortitude to bear them, are not the virtues of tragedy, conversant as it is with misfortune; it is proud to indulge in sorrow, to pour its tears without the control of reason, to die of disappointments (by the stroke of self-murder) which wisdom would have overcome. There is an æra in the life of most young people, and those too the most amiable, where all this is their creed of excellence, generosity, and heroism, and that creed is drawn from romance and tragedy.—There is a certain sort of mind common in youth, and that too of the most amiable kind, tender, warm, and visionary, to which the walks of fancy and enthusiasm, of romantic love, of exaggerated sorrow, of trembling sensibility, are very unsafe. To readers of this complexion, the amusement, which the works abovementioned (novels and tragedies) afford, should I think be sparingly allowed, and judiciously chosen. In such bosoms feeling or susceptibility must be often repressed or directed; to encourage it by premature or unnatural means, is certainly hurtful. They resemble some luxuriant soils, which may be enriched beyond a wholesome fertility, till weeds are their only produce;

produce; weeds, the more to be regretted, as in the language of a novellist himself, "they grow in the soil from which virtue should spring."—From the *Lounger*, Vol. I.

The following is a reflection of Rousseau at the end of his *Eloisa*.—"I cannot conceive, what pleasure it can give a writer to imagine and describe the character of a villain; to put himself in his situation, as often as he represents his actions, or to set them in the most flattering point of view. For my part I greatly pity the authors of many of our tragedies, so full of wickedness and horror, who spend their lives in making characters act and speak, what one cannot see or hear without shuddering. It would be a terrible misfortune to me to be condemned to such labour, nor can I think, but that those, who do it for amusement, must be violently zealous for the amusement of the public. I admit their genius and talents, but I thank God, that he has not bestowed such talents upon me."

END OF THE SIXTH PART.

P A R T

P A R T VII.

CONTAINING A REVIEW OF CERTAIN PUBLICATIONS ON THIS SUBJECT,
IN WHICH OUR COMPASSION IS ATTEMPTED TO BE EXCITED IN OPPO-
SITION TO OUR JUDGMENT.

C H A P. I.

Familiar letters more calculated to do mischief than regular systems of scepticism —
“ Sorrows of Werter.”—An unjustifiable compassion excited by his tale.—Resolution
requisite in a writer to combat so general a prejudice.—Reasons, why a moral
writer may wish to restrain the tear of “ indiscriminate” sensibility, without de-
servng to be accounted himself void of quick feelings.—Abuse of the term sensibi-
lity; its true and exalted import set forth. The general character of Werter.—
His passions ungovernable, because ungoverned.—How far his sense of religion
extended.—Danger of submitting to the warm emotions of the heart in preference
to the cool deductions of reason.—The sentiments of Werter on many points inde-
fensible and dangerous.—Instances respecting religion and suicide produced and an-
swered.—Observations on the perturbed life and death of Werter.—The vague com-
parison of Werter and Chatterton exposed.—How careful authors ought to be of the
moral tendency of their writings.—Two apologies made for the publication of these
pernicious letters; one, that they were not intended to encourage suicide; the
other, that they contain a true story.—These apologies overturned.—Other evil
consequences of the publication of these letters displayed.—Particularly their dan-
gerous attacks on conjugal fidelity and happiness under the deceitful mask of friendly
attachments.—Great mischief of the publication of true stories, which only tend
to excite pity on behalf of some act of violent passion.—Censurable passages in the
preface annexed to the English translation from the German.—Concluding address
to the reader on the whole subject of Werter.—Observations on a small volume en-

titled "Love and Madness."—Some sentiments concerning suicide contrasted out of these letters, according as the writer was under the dominion of reason or passion.—His final horror of the crime of suicide, and his wishes that the world could know it, in order to blunt the edge of his evil example in having once attempted it.—The question—"May I not murder myself rather than run the hazard of murdering another in the violence of my passion," proposed and answered.

IN the foregoing chapters the "theory" of suicide has been considered on the principles of some modern philosophers and others; particularly as it has been defended in the writings of Hume. The present part of the inquiry shall refer to its "practice" in some remarkable instances, wherein also the memory of the crime has been perpetuated by means of imprudent publications, calculated to arrest a compassion useless to the deceased, but directly tending to enlarge the influence of his dangerous example.—As the elegant, but pernicious letters of Lord Chesterfield to his son contained a system of ethics or lessons adapted to form the living manners of the "great world," according to the speculations of sceptical and infidel writers; so those, which are now about to pass in review, are an appendage of the same "practical" nature to the theories of the modern defenders of suicide. But as the correspondence of the peer is familiar, insinuating, and graceful, beyond any regular system of infidelity; so are these letters calculated to arrest the passions of every description of readers, and more generally to captivate and mislead their judgment, than any arrangement of metaphysical subtleties, though dressed in the fascinating and insidious language of an Hume. Hume aims at reasoning; which is too laborious a task for many a class of readers: the letters in question apply immediately and solely to the passions; and therefore they gain a ready admission into every heart, whose avenues are not carefully guarded against the insinuations of a false species of compassion.

Where the attention is arrested by a title of woe, one might reasonably expect to find a delineation of the sufferings of some innocent heart, borne down by the pressure of unsought and unavoidable misery. But what a disappointment ensues, what an outrage is committed on every sensation of our "rational" compassion, when a love-sick tale, founded on the voluntary continuation of a very censurable and unlawful species of attachment, is all that is to be met with
in

in the "Sorrows of a Werter!"—Yet these sorrows [u] are described with so much warmth and passion, as to have caused an almost universal tear of pity to be shed over his untimely fate:—a pity however in no shape justifiable on any suggestion of prudence, social felicity, or domestic union, of moral or religious principle; and therefore as censurable in its copious exertion, as pernicious in its progress, and destructive in its end;—a pity [x] founded on nothing but the regular effects of an unlawful and uncontrolled passion. Had these sorrows of Werter only been held in the same degree of favour with the common herd of novels, they would not have merited much particular notice in a work of this nature. But the unbounded partiality which has been shown towards this publication, (which has in fact nothing to recommend it, but the extravagant passion of its hero expressed in warm and animated language) makes it as necessary to expose the evil tendency of its principles and conclusion, as it is perhaps hazardous to the fame of the writer with many a reader, to attempt to throw discredit on so favoured a tale. For it requires no small share of resolution to combat such a general prejudice, and to censure a work that has been

[u] This pernicious publication was first broached in Germany by one Goethe; then translated into French; and a few years since into English from the French copy; when it met with astonishing encouragement under the title of the "Sorrows of Werter." The last English translation of 1786 is said to be from the original German. It assumes the less interesting title of "Werter and Charlotte," a German story. It is also somewhat preferable to the former translation, as it contains occasional notes and strictures on Werter's conduct, and condemns his suicide; but its preface contains much objectionable matter, as will be shown hereafter.—This book has been publicly condemned at Geneva, and its sale prohibited.

[x] Werter's story is this. Going into retirement on the death of his first attachment, he soon meets with a second in the person of Charlotte, who is engaged to Albert, whom she sincerely loves, but who is then absent. Werter is informed of her engagement at their very first interview, but still in spite of all advice, either to attempt to marry Charlotte himself, or to permit her quietly to fulfil her engagements, and to retire from her presence, he suffers the mutual intimacy to gain strength. Albert returns, is married to Charlotte, and Werter (after a short interval of absence) voluntarily, and most dishonourably, fixes his abode near Albert and Charlotte. He pays such marked attentions to Charlotte, as justly rouse the suspicions and jealousy of Albert, and in consequence embitter his domestic happiness. Werter had just honour enough left not to tempt Charlotte to any acts of immediate guilt, but not enough to prevent his endeavours at engaging her affections, or to force himself away from a family, wherein he caused so much uneasiness.—Matters at length come to a crisis. He is told by Charlotte—"that things must not go on as they have done, that his visits must be less frequent:"—on which he shoots himself, as the result of a cool determination on his present situation.

read with uncommon avidity ; which has given birth to prints [Y], to novels, and dramatic representations ; besides supplying materials to an infinite number of fugitive pieces both in prose and verse, whose authors have sought to dignify the distresses of a Werter's love-sick mind. Yet truth, yet prudence, yet virtue, yet religion, (whose decisions, cold and phlegmatic as they may sound in many an ear, are of most serious import in the cause of social and domestic happiness)—all require a firm and decided judgment on the most destructive tendency of these favourite letters.

It is a common opinion with a certain description of readers—"that a writer, who wishes to point out the immoral tendency of any work replete with tenderness and sensibility, must himself be devoid of both ; " since nothing (say " they) but the unfeelingness of his own heart could induce him to wish to " stop the torrent of a generous pity." But such sort of reasoning is not more unjust and cruel than it is false. A moral writer may acknowledge and feel the keen pangs of sensibility, his bowels may yearn with pity on the distresses of others ; he may experience the force of every tender passion within himself ; but he may wish to direct these amiable effusions of the heart towards lawful objects ; towards objects really worthy their boundless exertion. In a word, it is his desire to " discriminate"—to expel the poison, to eradicate the thorn that lurks amid the sweets of an " undistinguishing" pity. It is possible surely to feel compassion for a man under those sufferings, which he has brought on himself through the obliquity of his own conduct ; but at the same time to wish thoroughly to expose those failings and vices, which brought such sufferings upon him : and the more dreadful one thinks the wretchedness of " his" fate, the more solicitude one may justly show in endeavouring to caution " others" against those fascinations of pity, which tend but to misguide and deceive the judgment ; lest compassion unrestrained should blend a mixture of excuse, of countenance, and at length of imitation. " Thus my unhappy passion (ob-

[Y] The woe-worn print of Charlotte, when considered as the portrait of a wife secretly pining after another attachment, though outwardly performing the chief points of her conjugal duty, is ill calculated to promote the cause of connubial fidelity. The flame of unlawful love is powerfully fanned by gazing on this picture of a " matchless" Charlotte thus admitting into her heart a sort of confidential friend, though necessarily connected with the disturbance of her own virtuous love and her affectionate husband's happiness.

" serves

“ serves Eloifa with great truth and propriety) assumed the form of “ humanity,” the more easily to deprive me of the assistance of “ virtue.”

Such being the case, a writer, who is earnest in the cause of virtue, from which “ real humanity” is inseparable, must set his face with disgust and horror against all such “ softenings” of vice, as would fain [z] make it breathe the air of virtue. As he strives therefore never to be caught himself by the illusions of tender language, of animated expressions covering “ a void of principle;” so he is as anxious to point out to others the dangerous precipice on which they stand, when they implicitly submit their judgment to the mere “ whistling of words;” when they sacrifice their “ reason” on every altar that is raised to the genius of indiscriminate compassion. For whatever degree of amiableness may belong to the susceptible heart, (and no doubt much is its due when under proper regulations) yet the term “ sensibility,” as it is commonly used, is deceitful in the extreme; being as often applied to dangerous, as to useful or honourable purposes. It is frequently exerted towards the least deserving objects, and without attending to any just discrimination of character. It is pleaded without end in behalf of irregularities in conduct and morals, and

[z] “ It is perhaps one of the most alarming symptoms of the degeneracy of morals in the present day, that the distinctions of “ right and wrong” are almost swept away in polite conversation. The most serious offences are often named with cool indifference, the most shameful profligacy with affected tenderness and indulgent toleration. The substitution of the word “ gallantry” for that crime, which stabs domestic happiness and conjugal virtue, is one of the most dangerous of all the modern abuses of language. Atrocious deeds should never be called by gentle names. This must certainly contribute more than any thing to diminish the horror of vice in the rising generation. That our passions should be too often engaged on the side of error, we may look for the cause, though not for the vindication, in the unresisted propensities of our constitution: but that our “ reason” should ever be employed in its favour, that our “ conversation” should ever be taught to palliate it, that our “ judgment” should ever look on it with indifference, has no shadow of excuse; because this can pretend to no foundation in nature, no apology in temptation, no palliative in passion. However defective therefore our practice may be; however we may be allured by seduction, or precipitated by passion, let us beware of lowering the “ standard of right.” This induces an imperceptible corruption into the heart, stagnates the noblest principle of action, irrecoverably debases the sense of moral and religious obligation, and prevents us from living up to the height of our nature. It cuts off all communication with virtue, and almost prevents the possibility of a return to it. If we do not rise as high as we aim, we shall rise the higher for having aimed at a lofty mark: but where the “ rule” is low, the practice cannot be high, though the converse of the proposition is not proportionably true.”—Thoughts on the Manners of the Great. Anon. 1788.

is often attended with a shameful perversion and prostitution of both. In short it has been tortured so much from its genuine and honourable import, as to render its application extremely doubtful and even dangerous; so that its true value can only be determined by its concomitant circumstances. Whereas the beautiful secret lies in allying sensibility and fine feelings with elevation of thought, with purity of personal character, with strength of mind and accuracy of judgment. True and virtuous sensibility then is no affectation of indiscriminate feeling on every trifling arrest of our compassionate temper; but rather consists in those disinterested and generous emotions of the heart, which are excited by a becoming sense of the "decorum" in actions, and of the indispensable regards for moral rectitude and virtue grounded on their just principles. True sensibility is not always engaged on the mournful side; but has its starting tear of heartfelt joy as ready at the recital of a noble and disinterested action, as at a tale of distress and woe. It feels a generous glow of sympathy on the exaltation of a virtuous character, and scorns to truckle its amiable feelings in behalf of a vicious one: it withholds any large share of its compassion from scenes of insignificant, if not vicious, distress, to bestow it in full measure on the "sorrows of real innocence." These are the criterions of a truly laudable sensibility, of generous sentiment, of a just and elegant mode of thinking; these are the warm sensations of an heart, which (according to a trite saying) "lies in its right place." But these are not so much the portion of common minds, as the blessings of a superior and enlightened understanding, employing its faculties in making due distinctions, and in adhering to such maxims alone, as are truly useful and beneficial to mankind.

But can any one consistently with such virtuous feelings allow his heart more than a most transient interest in the "sorrows of a Werter?" For what was the character [A] of this miserable man? He is said, "to have been possessed of shining abilities, accomplishments, and taste;" all which however he employed to no one useful purpose of life. But "nature had infused [B] too

[A] The author here means to fall in with the common opinion, that Werter is not a fictitious, but a real character; which opinion, whether it be true or false, is of no consequence to the point in hand; only that the idea of its being read as a true story more engages the attention and increases the mischief.

[B] See Preface to the English Translation from the German, 1786.

“ strong a proportion of passion into his composition.” Thus extravagancies of conduct are often thrown on poor nature, and she is abused for our own want of care and precaution. It is not meant to be asserted, that men are not born with a variety of tempers and different propensities; but a wide distinction is to be made between natural passions “ ungoverned” and “ ungovernable:”—a distinction however very little regarded by the writers of impassioned stories. It may be asserted with truth, that most of those, who contend that their passions are “ ungovernable,” have only rendered them so, by permitting them to be too long “ ungoverned;” by never having “ striven” to govern them, or even attempted the proper methods of effecting so important a business. Nature therefore in such men is not so much to blame as themselves. A disease will increase so fast upon us, while we apply no remedy to check its progress, that at length it will become (like our passions) incurable, only for want of being attended to in proper time. All this is acknowledged by Werter himself, who frankly confesses, “ that he is the slave of his passions, by which every “ thing that is rational in him is absorbed and overwhelmed;—he lets them [c] “ have their way.”

Yet better things were to have been expected from Werter, because he is said “ to have been impressed [d] with a deep sense of religion.” Now it is generally thought, that the impressions of religion are eminently conspicuous in regulating and directing the passions to their proper ends. But how did these deep impressions of religion show themselves to be implanted in the bosom of Werter? His religion consisted in admiring the beauties of the creation (see Letter ii.) but in disturbing the harmony of those parts of it, with which he was more intimately connected. For how far beyond this did his religion ex-

[c] In Letter iv. he says, “ My poor heart is as wayward as a sick child; and like one, I let it have its way. I have owned an hundred times, that I am to be blamed for letting my passions have such an ascendancy over my reason.”—Werter’s passions then were not “ ungovernable,” but “ ungoverned.” In the same letter he writes, “ I will have nothing to do with books. Books agitate the mind.” It is true of such books as his own “ Sorrows;” because they rouse the latent passions and cause the blood to boil in the veins. But books of innocent and moral tendency have always been thought to be (what they certainly are) the “ composers” of an agitated mind, the repellers of the rage and fury of the passions, when they threaten to overset the human frame.

[d] See Preface to the English edition from the German, 1786.

tend?

tend? Did it teach him to counteract his passions or to lead them to proper objects? Did it teach him to fly from a scene, in which he was strengthening a connexion, which could deserve no better a name, however palliated and glossed over by those, who have fallen into its snare, than that of a dangerous and adulterous sort of friendship? Did it teach him not to disturb the repose of an affectionate and worthy husband, or not to endanger the innocence and peace of an amiable and virtuous woman, who would fain have made an engaging and exemplary wife, but for his baneful presence? Did it teach him to employ his fine talents to any one useful purpose? Did it teach him to promote, what he so warmly recommends in his descriptions of rural imagery,—“ the “ innocence and sweets of domestic happiness?” Where then were all his boasted impressions of religion? What signify a few fine speculative notions of the Deity or his admirable works, when they are suffered to have no influence on the [E] regulation of our conduct?

Such then was the impassioned character of a Werter;—useless to the world in general, imbittering to the happiness of individuals, and tormenting to himself; and therefore neither amiable, desirable, nor worthy of compassion. But the female reader will plead for compassion, because she will say, “ Poor “ man! he died a martyr to the most tender of passions. How could he fly “ the object of his love? The sight of her alone was a balm to his disordered “ mind. The illusions of love are delightful; who can withstand them? Surely “ all its flatteries are true! at least it must be an heart of adamant, that can “ resist the pathos of its language! does not its torrent rush on the inmost

[E] Werter writes thus contemptuously of “ practical” religion in some verses of his own published at the end of the English translation from the German.

What is religion, but a mode
Which those, who are truly brave, explode,
Contriv'd to curb the will,
And heart-felt sorrow bear?
Next mild religion's hand
Ah, who can have command,
But your own self to banish every care?

Here in the true spirit of modern infidels, religion is deemed a bugbear, invented to curb the will of man, and to prevent his committing suicide at pleasure.

“ foul

“foul and bear down all opposition?” Yet let the female reader be assured, that whatever tale of tender woe arrests the feelings of compassion without the approbation of the judgment, or even contrary to its plainest dictates,—let it be disguised under what deceitful name soever, such as the “overflowings of a generous heart, the soft tear of sensibility,”—it tends when encouraged only to delusion, disquietude, and torment; robbing the soul of its innocence and ease, if not conducting it at length into the paths of gross error, vice, and wickedness.—The warm emotions of the heart are indeed often preferred to the cool deductions of the understanding and judgment; but such a preference has no just claim to our assent. An action performed as the result of the latter stands on firm grounds of utility, virtue, and substantial benevolence; whereas the sudden emotion may be “extorted” by the fascinations of eloquence or the well-wrought tale of woe, and is indeed always an arrest or insinuation of the passions. The first effusions of the heart, as being almost involuntary [F], are always to be suspected. Whatever tends to raise them applies immediately to the passions, and the quick decisions of these are not always to be found on the side of reason. The heart is deceitful above all things, and prompts, by a variety of impositions and artifices unheeded by its possessor, to actions totally [G] indefensible.

Pernicious

[F] “The heart deceives us a thousand ways and acts from a suspicious principle; but reason always proposes a just end; the rules of duty which it enjoins are safe, evident, and practicable; and whenever our reason is led astray, we enter into idle speculations (“meaning we attempt to palliate and justify our deviations”), which were never intended to be objects of her examinations.”—Eloisa, Letter cxiii.

[G] The author cannot on this occasion withhold his opinion of the unjust and dangerous admiration, which is bestowed on another writer, whose whole excellence consists in working up the passions and crying down the dictates of sober sense and prudence; whose wit is but an assemblage of latent ribaldry, whose applications are all to the passions or indiscriminate feelings of the heart, and none to the judgment or reason of his reader. But into what errors, confusion and wretchedness will that man fall himself, what misery and unhappiness will he bring on others, who follows the unrestrained effusions of his heart without suffering them to be controlled by the dictates of his understanding! that is, by prudence, sense and judgment;—those “cold” virtues, as some are pleased to call them; though in fact they are the safeguards of all that is amiable or desirable in life. These however are perpetually scouted and exposed to ridicule in the (therefore most pernicious) writings of a “Sterne.” His genius, which is readily acknowledged, is but a poor compensation for the mischief of his pen, which has taught so many to consider the first effusions of their hearts as what ought to be followed, without a thought on their propriety or innocence.

Pernicious sentiments broached and defended are even worse than bad actions. The disorder of the passions may be sometimes pleaded in extenuation of the latter, and a man may be far from approving his own conduct; in which case there are hopes of his future amendment. But when wrong principles and faulty maxims of life are once adopted, they must needs misguide the judgment, as well as corrupt the heart, and so prevent a possibility of a return into the paths of just thinking and virtue. On this account less approbation is due to the sentiments, which flowed from the pen of Werter (especially those respecting suicide) than to the general outline of his character. This will be evinced from remarking many expressions and sentences to be found in his letters. "However a man's action be circumscribed (says Werter in *Let. vii.*) he preserves in his bosom the idea of liberty; that sweet remembrance fills him with glee, and intimates that it is in his power, whenever he likes it, to quit his prison."—Here is a general defence set up in favour of suicide, the thoughts of which are represented, as constituting the happiness of mankind; as that which supports a man under every trial and bears him up under every affliction. But it will in general be found, that a man's patience under pain or affliction proceeds (when religion is not taken into the account) from his hopes of being one day freed from his sufferings, and at liberty to enjoy life again, rather than from any thoughts that he may quit his prison when he pleases. The suicide lives till hope is dead, but never lives a moment under the pangs of misery, to enjoy the speculative

Such wild geniuses would fain persuade others into the erroneous opinions, which they entertain of themselves, that they have "necessarily" a greater flow of the milk of human kindness, milder affections, and warmer feelings of humanity, than men of more regular lives and stricter morals; whom they are pleased to style, in sovereign contempt, men of prudence, precision, and formality. But in what channel does this more copious stream of benevolence usually flow? wherein are these more tender sensibilities, nicer feelings, or more upright hearts chiefly discernible? Is it not in acting on many occasions, as if they thought all common moral obligations and duties superseded in themselves on the score of their genius? on being "above" all those paltry considerations, which bind men of plain, good sense to act within the sphere of common duties, and to do all the good they can in a sober, steady, and uniform habit? Let the world judge, which in reality possesses the finer sentiments.

It is also a most unjust and cruel reflection to throw out, that those writers (whoever they be) who censure such works of genius, as appear to them to have an immoral tendency, or are calculated only to enflame the passions, can have no love for genius themselves and no heart.—They have certainly no turn or love for that sort of genius, which only exerts itself in adding fuel to the flame of combustible passions, or heart, to despise the regularity of virtue. But they will not so readily yield the palm of an anxious and well-directed sensibility to these luxuriant branches of genius and eccentricity.

and

and superlative pleasure of contemplating, that he may die when he pleases. From hence however it should seem, that Werter encouraged the principle of suicide in his mind, as an innocent and proper refuge from any fore trouble, into which the violence of his temper might at any time lead him: but the person, who is thus persuaded, will never attempt to combat, much less conquer, his passions.

In Letter xxv. he says, “ Albert is now arrived, and all the pleasure I enjoyed in Charlotte’s company is at an end. I reflect on my past folly. I hate and despise myself: but I should despise him still more, who could tell me coolly, that I must reconcile myself to the contingencies of my fate; for it could not happen otherwise. Let me never meet such silly persons.”—But such silly notions, and such silly advancers of them, are nevertheless the protectors and guardians of social peace and happiness; and among their number he found his own friend, to whom he was then writing. He advises him in the spirit of true friendship, either to gain Charlotte entirely before she became another’s by marriage, or to quit her altogether; “ neither of which extremes (Werter says) he is inclined to follow, but to devise a middle way of his own.”—Hence it is plain, that he could conquer his love to a certain degree on the principles of honour, by not wishing to interfere with the priority of Albert’s claim. Had he gone one step further, and by principles of religion conceived his presence dangerous and sinful, because destructive of domestic peace and happiness, and in due time have retreated, he would then have been entitled to the highest encomiums. Whatever “ Sorrows” he might then have felt, or whatever sufferings he might have undergone in this conflict of virtue, he would have truly merited the highest degree of pity; because then judgment would have approved and countenanced every emotion of compassion towards him. But his “ middle way” of neither advancing in time nor retreating afterwards, was full-fraught with misery to all parties; was the cause of “ innocent” sorrows to Albert and Charlotte, of “ deserved and guilty ones” to himself.

Letters xxviii. and xxix. contain a conversation between Albert and Werter on the subject of suicide, in which Werter uses his extravagance of thought in

its defence, and Albert his usual coolness and calmness of temper [H] in its reprobation. "What right has any man (says Werter) in speaking of an action, immediately to decide that it is bad, wise, or good? What do you mean by all this? Have you carefully examined and fairly unfolded all the reasons, which gave it birth, and which made it necessary? If you had done all this, you would not be so hasty in your decision."—Now an action may be criminal (as Albert remarks) in its own nature, notwithstanding the motives to its commission by a particular individual were not so. Stealing is a crime; but where the motives to it are extreme penury and hunger, who can much blame the hand that purloins a piece of bread? An action may be the effect of an error in judgment, of ignorance, or even of insanity, and though bad in itself, be not on those accounts blamable in the doer, nay perhaps to a certain degree even meritorious, as long as the performer of it follows the dictates of his conscience though misinformed or misguided. But with respect to the general theory of suicide, though it would be presumption absolutely to pronounce the condemnation of "every one," who commits it, yet all the usual motives producing it have been carefully examined, every point of reasoning in its favour has been fairly unfolded, and no principles of suicide have been discovered, but what are unsocial, disgraceful, criminal; but what are weak, wicked, and unnatural;—that judgment and reason never urge to its practice, but scepticism, despair and frantic passion. These frantic passions set aside every other idea, even the fear of death itself; these like untamed steeds run away with their riders, and plunge them into the bogs and bottomless quicksands of lawless love, ungovernable jealousy, despair, distraction, murder, suicide. Wherefore notwithstanding Werter's accusation of temerity, there needs no scruple to affirm in general terms and at first hearing, that suicide cannot be noble, wise, or

[H] Werter compares his own and Albert's character thus in Letter xxv. "The smoothness and calmness of his temper forms a striking contrast with the irregularity and impetuosity of mine; and yet his feelings are fine; for though cool, he is not phlegmatic, and he knows the value of the happiness he possesses."

Charlotte thus contrasts their characters in the letters attributed to her (and written to a female friend) during her acquaintance with Werter. Lett. xv. "There is a wild enthusiasm in the friendship and sentiments of Werter, that must subject him to perpetual extremes of happiness or misery. That spark of divinity, which animates his frame, resembles one of those glaring meteors that sometimes cross the hemisphere, at once exciting dread and pleasure. I thank Heaven, the soul of Albert more resembles a fixed star."

virtuous in itself, but weak, presumptuous, and wicked.—Werter then enters
 “ into the feelings of a man, whose mind is occupied by the intrusion of some
 “ violent passion, which destroys its powers, and changes the direction of all
 “ its operations; and he proves such an one to be out of the reach of advice
 “ and reason; and that those, who counsel him, are like people in health,
 “ who visit the bed of a sick man, but are incapable of communicating to him
 “ any portion of their own strength.” Very true; but what does all this
 prove? Nothing with respect to the lawfulness or propriety of suicide, but only
 that it is an irrational act (according to his own ideas of it) and committed
 then, when a man has lost or is least guided by his reason. Besides, general
 deductions from the conduct or feelings of a few individuals are unfair, and
 inconclusive. Some few disordered persons may regard life as a burden, but
 the generality of mankind esteem it a blessing, and are anxious to preserve it
 even on its worst terms. “ Every thing (as Albert justly observes) in the ge-
 neral system of our world, in the material, the vegetable, and animal creation,
 is rendered subservient to the production and conservation of life. If the species
 of animals multiply, it is to repair the losses, to which their frailty exposes
 them; if the term of their existence be limited and confined, it is to prevent
 their increase from becoming excessive. The grand object, which the whole
 plan of nature seems to have in view, is the plenitude and support of the animal
 system.” On this comprehensive view of things suicide must ever be unlawful,
 as it counteracts the system of nature, and makes life depend on the caprice and
 ill-humour of every individual.—Werter then, as a sort of reply, describes the
 situation of a love-sick girl, who drowns herself when deserted by her lover;
 and adds; “ it is a parallel case with a person, who dies by sickness. Nature
 “ has no other way to escape. Her powers being exhausted, cannot contend
 “ with the difficulties, which seem increasing as she goes, and death must be
 “ the consequence. ’ Woe unto those who say, “ a foolish creature, why did
 “ she not wait till time had worn off the impression? her despair would have
 “ been softened, her love of life would have returned, and she would have
 “ found another lover [1] to comfort her.” Might not I as well say of a man—
 “ a fool, he died of a fever! why did he not wait, till he had recovered his strength,

[1] Did not Werter find this true however in his own case after the death of his first love? why then not continue the same remedy and retire from Charlotte? she ought to have been dead to him, when married to another.

“ till his blood was cooled? then would he have recovered, all would have
 “ been well and he still alive?”—Werter certainly here (as he says of himself
 elsewhere) associates most extravagant ideas; as if a man in a fever, who does
 all he can to “ preserve” life, can be under the same predicament with one,
 who does all he can to “ destroy” it! Their only similarity consists in their both
 dying. It is readily acknowledged, that reason does not act at all, when the
 passions are let loose; but are we therefore to rest satisfied with, or in any de-
 gree to approve of, the consequences of those passions? In what shape does re-
 ligion appear to have made its impression on Werter, who can thus argue from
 the uncontrolled strength of the passions in favour not only of the actual ac-
 complishment (since that will happen in consequence of such passions) but of
 the lawfulness of suicide? But we find him meditating self-murder on more
 occasions than that of love; which only proves him to have been a man of
 general impetuosity in “ all” his actions. For upon being civilly dismissed a
 company, where court-etiquette required he should not have presented himself,
 he writes thus (Let. xlvii.) “ An hundred times have I seized a knife with
 “ intention to plunge it into my anguished heart. I wish to open my veins
 “ and to gain eternal liberty.”—So that in this case he was ready to devote him-
 self to the feelings of chagrin and indignation, and his proud and disdainful
 heart would have taken shelter [κ] in self-murder. Where are still his boasted
 impressions of religion?

He now makes a voluntary return (after a short absence) into the bosom of
 wretchedness and misery, or in other words to be continually present with the
 unattainable object of his wishes, who is now become the wife of Albert. “ I
 “ smile (says he, Let. liv.) at the weakness of my heart—and yield to its dic-
 “ tates.” After this rash and unqualified resolution, what good can be expected
 [L] to follow?

In

[κ] The advice given him at court was good—“ not totally to extinguish that impetuous disposition
 “ which carried him through business with such violence; but so to abate its ardour, that his abilities
 “ might always have a fair exertion.”—See Let. xlv.

N. B. His friends had procured him an honourable appointment at court, in order to keep him at
 a distance from Charlotte; but he soon threw it up in disgust, and returned into the country.

[L] “ Though “ lovers”—of all creatures, tame or wild,
 Can least brook management, however mild;

Yet

In Let. lv. “Alas! my friend, this worthy man Albert loves her with all his soul; and what does not such a love merit!”—It merits at least, that you, Werter, should retire, and not seek to interrupt this worthy man’s happiness.

In Let. lvii. “In my reveries I cannot help thinking, if Albert were to die —then would—yes she would;—and then I pursue this chimera, till it leads me to the brink of a precipice, from which I start back with horror.”—Here is a satanical instigation, which however he smothers, though he says in his last letter to Charlotte, “he has often thought of murdering Albert.”

In Let. lx. “I could wish myself at the devil, when I reflect on the number of contemptible wretches, whom the Almighty suffers to exist in the world, without any idea or feeling for what little is really valuable in it.”—This is spoken in the height of superciliousness. Perhaps the contemptible wretches (as he deems them) fill up their portion of life with much more propriety and

Yet let a poet (poetry disarms
The fiercest animals with magic charms)
Risque an intrusion on thy pensive mood,
And woo and win thee to thy proper good.
Pastoral images and still retreats,
Umbrageous walks and solitary seats;
Sweet birds in concert with harmonious streams,
Soft airs, nocturnal vigils, and day-dreams,
Are all enchantments in a case like thine,
Conspire against thy peace with one design:
Soothe thee to make thee but a surer prey,
And feed the fire that wastes thy powers away.
Up—God has formed thee with a wiser view,
Not to be led in chains, but to subdue;
Calls thee to cope with enemies, and first
Points out a conflict with thyself,—the worst.

Post away swiftly to more active scenes,
Collect the scatter’d truths that study gleans;
Mix with the world, but with its wiser part;
No longer give an image all thine heart;
Its empire is not her’s, nor is it thine,
’Tis God’s just claim, prerogative divine.”

COWPER’S Poems, Vol. I. Retirement.

usefulness

usefulness to themselves and their fellow-creatures, than a Werter with all his sensibilities, his talents, and accomplishments:—and yet he disdains “to exist” in such company.

In Let. lxii. His comments on the following passage in Ossian still tend to exalt suicide. “The venerable bard, looking on the cold earth, which is “shortly to cover him, cries out—The stranger will come, he will come, who “has beheld my beauty and will exclaim, where is the illustrious son of Fingal? he will wander over my tomb and seek me in vain.”—“At that instant, my friend, (says Werter) I could, like a true and noble knight, unsheath my sword, and rescue my prince from the tedious languor of life; afterwards by putting a period to my own existence, follow the demigod, whom I had set at liberty.”—The wildness of Ossian’s scenes are now better adapted to the perturbations of Werter’s mind, than the simple majesty of his once favourite Homer.

In Let. lxiv. “I am more and more persuaded, my friend, that the existence of a single being is of very little consequence.”—This point he maintains, “from the indifference with which people mention, and the short time they feel the loss of any person.”—Common acquaintance can grieve no more than he mentions;—the world would be a world of woe indeed were it otherwise: neither do near connexions always lament their loss of friends, with that warmth, or for that continuance, which might sometimes be expected, and the loss perhaps deserves. An undutiful and graceless child may be in haste to step into the possessions of his parent;—but is the parent’s life then of no real (though not perhaps by the son of acknowledged) consequence? probably of the greater, in proportion as it is less valued by the son.—Besides which it must be remembered, that the loss, which proceeds from suicide, always acts with redoubled force on the feelings of surviving friends.—As Werter rests his small consequence of an individual’s life on this argument only, we are not obliged to pursue it further in this place; especially after having done it in others.

In Let. lxix. “Doomed to love the wife of my friend, and yet my friendship to remain sincere.”—But not doomed by unavoidable compulsion to continue in her daily presence, and thereby to feed the flame of thy love. The man,

man, who voluntarily fans the fuel of his passion, must expect at length to perish in those flames he is raising about his ears. But it is a hard matter to enter into the fidelity of that friendship, which to gratify its own passion continues to disturb the repose, the domestic peace, and tenderest feelings of a friend, though stopping short of ultimate points. The experiment also is desperately dangerous to man or woman, to encourage an intercourse of such an hazardous nature.

In Let. lxx. "Leave me to my sorrows. I have fortitude enough to surmount them. I revere our religion. I am persuaded "that" imparts vigour to the enfeebled, and consolation to the afflicted:—and yet has it this effect on all alike?"—It may safely be replied—no;—because the promise of this effect belongs only to those, who also strive to assist themselves. If our religion teach us to pray to God "not to lead us into temptation," it is scarcely to be expected, that the Almighty will give us additional grace and strength to overcome that temptation, into which we have not only led ourselves, but in which we voluntarily continue.

In Let. lxxiii. Invoking the Almighty Werter says, "Father, whom I know not,—Thou, who wert wont to cheer my soul, but now concealest thyself from me—call on me—be silent no longer. Thy silence however will not delay the soul, which pants after Thee. No father would be wrathful against his son, if he returned unexpectedly to him, and hung on his neck and said—Pardon me my father, for coming back before the appointed time. The world is every where the same; labour and pain, misery and pleasure,—all are alike to me. I can find no happiness, but in thy presence, and there only will I enjoy it. Wouldest Thou, celestial Parent, expel this child from thy presence?"—The cause of the unbidden return must determine the matter even with an earthly parent:—the rest is mere rhapsody, especially when applied to an heavenly one.

In Let. lxxvii. "Shuddering I rushed with open arms towards the precipice. I hesitated. I sighed and lost myself in the pleasing idea of burying all my life, all my torments in that abyss, and of rolling among the billows. O that my feet were not chained to this vile earth! I might have finished my

“woes! But my hour is not yet come. I feel it. With what extasy could I have exchanged my nature to be incorporated with the storms, to tear the atmosphere, and to disturb the deep! May I not one day be released from this prison [M] and taste this bliss!”

In letter lxxviii. “It is all over—my senses are disordered—all places are indifferent—I have nothing to wish—nothing to languish after—it were better to depart.”—Werter from the beginning entertained notions very favourable to suicide; but he seems stoic-like to have sought some dignified opportunity of putting them into execution on himself. Though his passions had nothing stoical in them, and though his determination of quitting life arose from the excess of a frantic one, yet (such are the contrarieties in man) he wishes to make the action appear to be founded on the most mature deliberation and conviction [N] of mind.—However he had his doubts and struggles, as appears from the

[M] “I markt his desultory pace,
His gestures strange and varying face,
With many a muttered sound.”

WARTON'S *Ode on Suicide*.

[N] Werter says in a letter to Charlotte found after his death, “Charlotte, I am resolved to die:—this I tell you coolly and deliberately on the morning of that day, in which you will see me for the last time. I have passed a dreadful night; or rather let me deem it a propitious one, that has fixed my wavering resolution. I will die. A thousand ideas, a thousand schemes occurred to my imagination,” (n. b. this was after Charlotte had given him the best and wisest advice about absence, employing his talents &c. and had told him, he must not visit her as usual) “but this, this is rooted in my heart—“I will die.”—It is not despair. It is a certainty, that I have filled up the measure of my woes, and that I must sacrifice myself to thy peace—yes to thy peace—why should I conceal it? One of us must die: it shall be Werter. O my dear Charlotte, this breast governed by rage and fury, has often indulged the idea of murdering Albert, you, myself!”—Again; “All around me breathes nothing but silence, and my soul is serene. Gracious God, I thank thee for enduing me at this awful moment with warmth and vigour. Charlotte, I can without shuddering hold the fatal instrument of death. “You” delivered it to me, and I recoil not.” (n. b. Charlotte happened by Albert’s order to take down the pistols, which Werter sent to borrow as for a journey. This accident he interprets into both heaven’s and her approbation of his intended suicide)—“All, all is done. All the wishes of my heart are fulfilled. My soul hovers over the grave. Be at peace—let me intreat you be at peace. They are loaded—the clock strikes twelve—I go—farewel, Charlotte, farewel.”

When

the following fragment among his papers. “ Her presence, her fate, the interest she discovers for mine, still draw tears from my withered brain. One draws the curtain and passes to the other side. Why this delay and all this trembling? It is because we are ignorant of what is behind; it is because there is no returning; and we imagine it is all darkness and confusion, where there is no certainty.” These however are not the demurs of a Christian. Christianity enlightens this darkness, and yields sufficient information of what is beyond the grave, to furnish certainty enough of the temerity and unlawfulness of suicide. But the “ deep impression” (as it is called) of religion in a Werter’s breast taught him—not indeed to foster any-idea of annihilation [o], but

When a man flying to suicide on the extravagance of any passion pleads coolness and serenity on the occasion, it can only be a proof of his real insanity on that point. Was it not a mark of the clear dereliction of Werter’s reason, to suppose his horrid end would be either countenanced by, or could give peace to, the mind of Charlotte?—But the coolness of some suicides not actuated to become such by violent passions, shall be particularly considered in the cases of Smith and Von Arenswald in the next chapter.

[o] Werter writes in his last letter to Charlotte. “ To-day I stand all in vigour;—to-morrow I shall be cold and stiff on the ground. At this moment I possess myself; the next detached, separated, perhaps for ever. No, Charlotte, no; we have now an existence; how can we be annihilated? Annihilation! It is a word conveys no idea to my mind. Death—grave—I know not the meaning of the words. Albert is your husband—what of that? it is only for this world—and to rob him of you in this world only were a crime. It is a crime—I have enjoyed it in all its extasy, and I punish myself for it. I have found a balsam for my soul. From this moment you are mine. Charlotte I go before—I go to my father—to your father—at the foot of whose throne I will pour forth my sorrows and receive consolation till you arrive. Then I will fly to meet you, embrace you, and continue with you for ever in the presence of the Omnipotent.

“ To the bright regions of the world above
 “ I speed to taste in bliss seraphic love.
 “ Yet faint the joys my fancy pictures there,
 “ While thou on earth art fairest of the fair :
 “ To me Elysium will a desert prove
 “ Till with thy presence blest and with thy love.”

These are strange conceptions of Werter! and though he says in the same place “ he neither dreams nor rages,” are only imputable to the insanity of love.

Eleanora (in the novel called by her name, and who is supposed to be in love with Werter, but neglected by him) speaks much better on the same topic. “ Ah, no, Eleanora; thou forgettest, that in those regions of delight every less affection will be dissolved, that thou shalt be raised to so superior

but to rush unbidden and uncalled into the presence of his Almighty Father; where he expected not to enjoy the happiness of heaven (that idea he scouted) but to wait for bliss, "till he should be joined above by the object of his earthly affection."

Such then was the perturbed life and violent death of the miserable Werter. The careless peruser of these letters finds his heart affected with the picture of his sorrow, and without considering, that the first emotions of the heart are

"an height of glory, that thy beating heart will be at rest." Vol. II. P. 151. Her reflections likewise on hearing of the death of Werter are just and good (Vol. II. end.) "Werter is dead—dead by his own hand:—but I am calm, composed, and the mercy of heaven is upon me. Rash young man! how couldest thou thus rush into the presence of thy Creator, unbidden and unlooked for! Is this the effect of thy noble, thy exalted sentiments of religion? how couldest thou thus disgrace them?—And to raise up "reasoning" to support thy system! Ah it shrinks from the piercing eye of truth, her penetration blasts it, and it withers. Was it for thee to judge? What feat thinkest thou could be prepared for the son, who had been sent into a distant country to fulfil his father's commands, and upon whose perseverance in his duty the happiness of multitudes depended? He departs, he finds dangers and difficulties on the road; he never once attempts to obviate and explain them for the benefit of others. He meets the "virtues," and he thrusts them by; he will not listen to their voice, though they would teach him truth and wisdom. The "pleasures" present themselves, and he caresses them, till he finds their sting deeply fixed in his heart: they tear his vitals and destroy his soul. This was the effect of his own choice—but he will not bear it; his restless and perturbed spirit will bear no control:—he will return from whence he came. The virtues call to him as he passes along, but he disdains their interference and wilfully rushes into the presence of his Father. "My voice has not recalled thee, my son, nor canst thou so soon have fulfilled my commands. I gave thee talents to distinguish, and I set thee on the way; but lo thou art returned—render an account of thyself."—When the Eternal said, "be free," he gave us all to choose: the right and the wrong was set before us; truth was explained and consequences denounced. The great and awful decree held firm against suicide. We know the path that leads to it; the passions go before, and while we pursue, we see our danger. What then but a devout and humble resignation to the will of the Supreme can procure us happiness hereafter? What merits shall we have to boast, if we have never exercised the talents given to our care? What master but expects obedience in his servant? Many are the afflictions and sharp are the pangs I have endured, but have they not arisen from the strength of my passions? These you will say were natural to me. They were—but what do I not owe to the bounteous giver of all good, who has listened to the voice of my prayer, and in some measure enabled me to subdue them! O Religion, thou pure and sacred source from which all my comforts have been drawn, deign to support me still;—through all the scenes that yet remain be thou my attendant; inspire my heart with the spirit of thy holiness and teach me resignation to the will of heaven!—But what a blow is this! It has filled up the measure of my sufferings—yet I am resigned:—yes I will wait with quiet expectation the fiat of the eternal God."

deceitful

deceitful above all things, gives himself up at once to pity, and from pitying to palliate and excuse the principles, the sentiments, the behaviour, and the death of the hero of the tale. While the more distinguishing reader drops his tear also over the pathos of the story, but quickly perceiving the snare that is laid to rouse his passions at the expence of his reason, soon ceases to admire, what he cannot approve. He examines into the principles of the book, the moral tendency of the story itself, and the sentiments of its hero; and finding nothing that can for a moment satisfy his reason, he stifles the “extorted” tear of pity, and feels himself no otherwise inclined to compassionate the case of a Werter, than he would do that of an unfortunate being deprived of his reason by the impetuosity of his ungoverned passions. He further reflects, that the involuntary lunatic is actually deprived of that reason, which he would have gladly suffered to have guided his steps; while the voluntary one (who becomes so by a determined pursuit of a violent passion) originally disdains the interference of reason. The involuntary lunatic therefore still merits our compassion, though we find ourselves under the necessity of precluding him from the power of doing harm either to himself or others; while the voluntary one deserves not even this share of our pity on his own account, but should be pointed out and avoided, as the bane of all social happiness. The pity in this case is not so much due to the wild animal that roams at large, as to those unfortunate beings, who unavoidably fall in his way, and become a prey to the effects of his extravagances. Let the scene of compassion be laid in its proper place. For instance, a good and virtuous wife is rendered miserable by the continual presence of one, who “will” throw himself in her way; an affectionate and worthy husband is disturbed in his domestic peace by the same presence. Who are the true objects of pity? this common disturber, or these innocent sufferers? the injured husband or his dangerous rival?—the wife, who strives to be virtuous, or the encroacher on her conjugal attachments? Let them then no longer be called the “sorrows of Werter;” but the “sufferings of Charlotte and Albert.”

But the feelings of Werter have been likened to those of the rash, but unfortunate Chatterton [P]; and by thus confounding their cases, it has been expected to give an additional share of dignity to the fall of Werter. . “His feel-

[P] The publisher, if not author, of the Poems ascribed to Rowley.

ings (says the writer of the preface to the English translation from the German) like those of our Chatterton, were too fine to support the load of accumulated distress, and like him "his diapason closed in death."—An harmonious metaphor it must be confessed, but rather unfortunately applied to the discordant notes of suicide. But in what were their feelings similar, or their cases capable of comparison, except in the single instance of their self-destruction? Chatterton was a wonderful character for his innate and early-ripened abilities; such an one as springs up once in many ages, to puzzle and confound the learning and judgment of maturity. There was nothing extraordinary in the genius of Werter, or that was above the level of many others in every age; though without a Chatterton's pretensions he equalled him in all the eccentricities, in all the pride of a conscious pre-eminence. The load of accumulated distress, (as it is called) which preyed on the mind of Werter, arose from the single indulgence of one irregular passion in himself, whose continuance must be deemed voluntary, because he not only took no pains to stifle it, but used all methods to encourage and increase it by a life of inactivity in the presence of its object. But whilst a Werter was thus wasting his precious time, and burying his talents in rust and obscurity, a Chatterton was moving with much toil and industry in the proper sphere of his uncommon genius. Whilst a Werter was voluntarily giving way to the excess of one outrageous evil, a Chatterton was as involuntarily and unavoidably sinking under a truly complicated load of real distress; such as chagrin and disappointment, penury and rags, cold and hunger. The lawless pursuit of the one plunged him at length into despair and suicide; while the other goaded by a keen and tremulous sensibility, hastily and rashly spurned an existence in that world, which seemed to treat himself and his genius with neglect and ingratitude. We pity the youth of Chatterton, and grieve to think, that the world was deprived of so extraordinary a character at such an early [Q] period; who would have employed his astonishing

[Q] Chatterton had not completed his eighteenth year, when he poisoned himself in August, 1770, being starving in a garret, because the monthly publishers, for whom he was writing, would scarce allow him pay sufficient to procure the meanest food and clothing. See a spirited account of Chatterton in Knox's Essays, Vol. II.—The following passage is taken from a book first published in 1779, on account of a then recent event, and entitled "Love and Madness;" in which is introduced a very circumstantial account of the unfortunate Chatterton.—"Such was the short and incredible life of Thomas Chatterton. Over his death for the sake of the world (he is out of the reach of our pity

astounding powers in literary productions, which would probably have been the admiration of ages. But what had the world to admire in the character or behaviour of Werter? or what had it to lose by his death? He not only lived to no useful purpose, but lived to distress a family of love and innocence; and he died a voluntary victim of an ungoverned passion: leaving behind him a set of insinuating and pernicious letters for the perusal of posterity. How then is the public interested in his life or death; or why should it so warmly compassionate his perturbed sorrows?

But there are two apologies set up for the publication of these letters; one,—"that it is neither intended by the editor, nor will it prove to be a palliation

"and concern) I would willingly draw a veil. But this must not be. They, who are in a condition
 "to patronise merit, and they, who feel a consciousness of merit, which is not patronised, may form
 "their own resolutions from the catastrophe of his tale; those, to lose no opportunity of befriending
 "genius; these, to seize every opportunity of befriending themselves: and upon no account to har-
 "bour the most distant idea of quitting the world (however it may be unworthy of them), lest de-
 "pendency should at last deceive them into such an unpardonable step.—Chatterton, as appears by the
 "Coroner's inquest, swallowed arsenic in water, on the twenty-fourth of August 1770; and died in
 "consequence thereof the next day. He was buried in a shell, in the burying-ground of Shoe-lane
 "work-house. His taking such a rash and unjustifiable step is almost as strange, as his fathering his
 "poems upon Rowley. That he should have been driven to it by absolute want, though I do not
 "say, it was not so, is not very possible; since he never indulged himself in meat, and drank nothing
 "but water. In the preface to Rowley's Poems, we are told, "he was reduced to real indigence,
 "from which he was relieved by death, in what manner is not certainly known." Now the manner
 "is certainly known; the cause (real indigence) is not.—Can any one be sure, he was not determined
 "to seal his secret with his death?"—From "Love and Madness."

"Is this, mistaken scorn will cry
 Is this the youth, whose genius high
 Could build the genuine rhyme?
 Whose bosom mild the favouring muse
 Had stor'd with all her ample views,
 Parent of fairest deeds and purposes sublime?

Ah from the muse, that bosom mild
 By treacherous magic was beguil'd
 To strike the deathful blow:
 She fill'd his soft, ingenuous mind,
 With many a feeling too refin'd,
 And rous'd to livelier pangs his watchful sense of woe."

WARTON'S Ode on Suicide.

" of

“ of suicide, or an incitement to its practice :”—the other—“ that it is a true story :”—both which excuses deserve consideration. In regard to the first. Many have supposed (says the English translator from the German in his own preface) and some have asserted ; that Goethe was an apologist for suicide, and that his work was an attempt to vindicate what is in itself indefensible : but these did not distinguish the writer from his book, absurdly ascribing to himself the errors and follies of his hero. By parity of argument we might with equal propriety arraign dramatic and epic writers for the foibles they represent in the characters they exhibit ; a mode of reasoning as weak as it is fallacious. Achilles according to Homer is wrathful ; the devil is reputed the hero of Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, and Count Fathom is a being, whom most honest folks would wish to shun :—but is Homer, Milton, or Smollet to be indited for the crimes perpetrated by the heroes of their own creation or contrivance ?”

When a man publishes a book of this sort “ without stricture or apology,” it is very natural to suppose the editor cannot be very averse to the principles and sentiments it contains. If he really were so, he would find an opportunity of pointing out its defects, and would take pains to counteract the insinuating poison of the woe-fraught tale ; or rather (seeing no valuable purpose could possibly be effected by its publication) he would suppress it entirely, as unwilling to perpetuate the memory, or to spread the contagion of a fallacious example : since (as has been before observed) a man can scarce do a more extensive injury to society, than by publishing an interesting and affecting tale, which, when sifted to the bottom, is found to be full of irreligious and dangerous principles of conduct. As little can any shelter be taken in this case under the wing of dramatic or epic writers ; since the best of these wish to insinuate instruction, and to disseminate useful truths, under the veil of fiction and poetry. When therefore they introduce (as they needs must) the foibles and vices of their heroes, they generally seize an occasion of pointing out and exposing their impropriety and danger, by the help of the chorus in Greek tragedy, or by means of counter-characters, or by the general turn of the piece or fate of their hero. Thus the evil principles and sentiments being effectually exposed, these representations and fictions may become not only safe and innocent, but exemplary and instructive. But where care is not taken to throw a proper stigma on immorality

morality and vice in its shape of delusion;—or still worse, where the representation of a faulty character is made insinuating, and apparently, or contrastedly, amiable, the performance, whatever its other ornaments and beauties may be, is miserably defective [R] and dangerous in point of good and moral tendency, and

[R] Instances of this kind frequently occur in our most admired English comedies; a striking example of which is to be met with in the “School for Scandal;” whose moral tendency is grossly defective and most highly censurable. If one character—that of Joseph—be very justly exposed to contempt and ridicule for having endeavoured to impose on mankind, under the borrowed mask of integrity and virtue, why is another—that of Charles—who is an open and professed libertine, represented in so very favourable a light, as to excite apparent partiality towards his misconduct? However detestable “hypocrisy” is in every shape, yet it should seem by this contrast, as if it were sufficient to be good, only by not being an hypocrite. It is much to be feared, lest the character of Joseph as here drawn, not only answers its purpose of exposing hypocrisy to the utmost detestation, but goes far beyond it, even to the insinuating a notion most favourable to vice—“that all show of virtue and “moral sentiment is a mere pretence, and must be fallacious and hypocritical.”—Does not this false and fatal idea too often impress itself on the mind of many an attendant on this exhibition from the picture of the hateful Joseph? Whereas the libertine conduct of Charles is forgotten in the supposed openness of his heart. Prudential restraints on wildness and extravagance, as well as reproofs for the same, are made subjects of ridicule; and many a young rake and spendthrift retires from these scenes fully “confirmed” in a consciousness of self-approbation and a contempt of all wholesome advice, whilst he is only imitating in private a character that is received on the stage with so much éclat.—It is also not only permitted, but even applauded in Charles to call “Justice—a slow-paced virtue, which cannot keep up with generosity.”—Are not our young men taught from hence to despise the very names of justice and common honesty; and to squander in all profusion on the promoters of their vices under the abused name of liberality, rather than pay their debts for the common necessities of life to their suffering tradesmen? Would it not be full as desirable to draw the attention of the rising generation to that trite, but laudable maxim—“that a man must “be just, before he can be generous?”

But great is the difference between representing a character according to nature (such as Charles’s is supposed to be) and portraying his foibles, errors and vices in such a favourable and contrasted light, as shall occasion their being mistaken by a careless reader for something bordering on the amiable and interesting. The making vice to breathe the air of virtue is of all species of writings the most dangerous. If a play or a book be not meant to instruct, but merely to amuse, (and mere amusement may be sometimes laudably aimed at in writing, as well as instruction) let its scenes and characters be so cautiously guarded, as not to run the most distant hazard of vitiating the morals or corrupting the principles of its reader. If the story represented be a criminal one, let the edge of its dangerous example be carefully and effectually blunted: let it be sure to be capable of doing no harm at least, if not pointed so as to inculcate some good.—“I would not willingly (says the amiable and judicious “Addison, Spect. N^o 179) laugh, but in order to instruct; or if I sometimes fail in this point, when “my mirth ceases to be instructive, it shall never cease to be innocent.”—An admirable rule, to which he strictly adhered in his most lively papers!—but a rule miserably and perpetually offended against in

and therefore deserving of much more censure than applause. Thus (to use his own instances only) Homer's whole *Iliad* sufficiently shows the impropriety and inconvenience of Achilles's anger; Milton makes not his Satan amiable or his case pitiable; and Smollet's *Count Fathom* (according to the translator's own ideas) is one, whom no honest man would wish to imitate: consequently the delineation of these characters leaves no danger of wrong impressions on the reader. But who can say the same of the impassioned tale of *Werter*? He being the describer of his own sorrows, the relater and judge of his own conduct, works up his situation with such warmth and pathos, as sensibly to affect every reader. Though each scene also of his distress is in consequence of his own irresolution and impropriety of conduct; and though the conclusion of his mournful tale is so objectionable, yet that conclusion is made by himself the effect of cool deliberation, is justified and approved, and even blasphemously supposed to meet the approbation of heaven. Wherefore an editor, not desirous of encouraging or seeming to approve of suicide, should not have exposed such a scene to the public eye, without mature deliberation on its probable consequences; without reflecting, that the keen edge of sensibility in numbers of his

many modern productions, not only of wit and humour, but in such as (like *Werter's* letters) attempt to excite our compassion and generous feelings.

When it is further considered, that stage-representations are so much encouraged in private houses, and that the first in fashion of both sexes do not disdain to exhibit in theatrical characters—how exquisitely pure ought to be the moral tendency of characters, which are thus honoured! even in proportion to the exalted station of the performers. But allowing them to be the best of the kind, it cannot be doubted, but that the tendency of this species of amusement must be dangerous to the interests of female delicacy and virtue in particular; that the impassioned situations, the rapturous speeches, and tender scenes, in which dramatic personages must be indulged, are all highly injurious to that amiable softness and decency of gesture and language, which is the characteristic of feminine grace and decorum:—that it tends to sap the foundations of chaste love, and to expel all that modesty and diffidence, which is the protection and ornament of female innocence; till at length there is hazard, lest every grace and virtue of domestic and conjugal life, should be overthrown. Our most most favoured English comedies likewise are too well adapted to effect such evil purposes; as they so much affect to ridicule the plain maxims of honesty and fidelity in conjugal love, and give open countenance and encouragement to scenes of the most vicious gallantry. The lively follies of a *Lady Townley*, while she ridicules conjugal attachment and rational employment of time, are calculated to make deeper and more lasting impressions on an audience than the much juster sentiments of a *Lady Grace*; neither are they to be effaced by her following recantations:—the sprightly follies are remembered with pleasure—the repentance is overlooked.—The moral effects of either tragedy or comedy according to modern management are very disputable.

readers,

readers, conjoining here with one of the strongest of natural passions, would produce a commiseration of a Werter's case, not easily separated under like circumstances from an approbation of his sentiments and an imitation of his conduct. To say, the book has been universally read and admired, only confirms the truth of this observation; since it has been known to have been made the express groundwork of imitation also. Many a wretched self-victim to his passions has been found, grasping with equal avidity in the awful moment his sword and these Sorrows: and many a deluded female has been discovered in the hour of her self-destruction, to have reclined her aching head [s] on this poisonous tale. Whatever therefore might have been the private sentiments of Goethe on the subject of suicide, it is of no material consequence to the world to be informed: but the effects of his publication (as he might reasonably have expected) are highly mischievous; and the more distinguished the character of Werter is described to be for taste, abilities, and improvements, and the more innocent his previous life, the more dangerous and fatal is the example of his death. When he is said moreover to have been impressed with a deep sense of religion, and that religion is applied by him in approbation of suicide, nothing could have been devised more favourable to the increase of its practice than the publication of these letters.

But suicide for the present apart—are there not many other principles and sentiments in this book of the most dangerous and destructive tendency? Is it not wholly addressed to the feelings and passions?—to the warmest and most ungovernable passion of the human breast, the most tender of all sensibilities—“Love?” Are not the characters represented as most engaging, amiable, and strictly virtuous? and yet the sort of connexion between Charlotte and Werter is imprudent, if not unlawful, from its origin; and the attachment is continued and cemented by an unrestrained intercourse. A “virtuous and married” Charlotte admits the visits of an ardent lover [r], even after they give pain to
a ten-

[s] See once instance recorded in the Gentleman's Magazine for Nov. 1784, p. 876. of a young lady, who destroyed herself, and these pernicious letters were found under her pillow.

[r] When Eloisa first fell, her friend Clara justly exclaimed, (Let. xxx.) “What a mortal blow has virtue itself received through your means, who was esteemed the very pattern of discretion!”

“Is it sufficient (says Eloisa, Let. cxxxi.) that my “heart” encourages me, when “reason” ought to alarm me? I have forfeited the right of depending on my own strength. How shall I rely

a tender husband :—an “honourable” Werter undermines the affections of his friend’s wife, and yet preposterously avers, “that his love is pure and his “friendship sincere.” Nor have these lovers the common excuse to plead of an amiable woman neglected by her husband; since to complete the virtuous group, an Albert is represented as adorned with every personal and mental accomplishment, and every affectionate and tender attention to the wife of his bosom.—Is there no latent poison in all this? In an age of adulterous intercourse like the present, will the example of Charlotte and Werter “never” be pleaded in behalf of the innocence of these confidential friendships and attachments to a third person in the married state? But can these attachments themselves deserve to be called virtuous friendships? Scarcely so; it is a gross abuse of the sacred term of friendship, when in its very principle it detrudes a virtuous and strict attention to the first and plainest duties of a married life. The mind may be polluted, though the body chance to continue pure; but it most rarely happens, that these estrangements of the mind from its proper object of affection and confidence are not the sources of every other evil. For how dangerous is the notion or principle easily to be deduced from our compassionating the case of a Werter—“that though engaged or even married, there is no such “great harm in keeping up an attachment to a third person, provided the “parties are supposed to stop short of ultimate connexion.”—It is pleaded, “that love is involuntary and therefore excusable.”—Yet granting this true in its origin, no one has a right to plead a passion’s being involuntary or insurmountable, before every method has been not only tried, but persevered in, of extinguishing its fury. But if the means of protracting the unlawful attachment are voluntarily employed; if every opportunity is seized of frequent intercourse, of secret correspondence and confidential friendship, it is a miserable deception to talk of its being an involuntary passion, or to attempt excusing it as such;—a deception that will probably end in the ruin of one or both parties. The precipice is particularly alarming to female honour and virtue; and its first approaches ought to be most carefully guarded against by every one, who wishes to avoid disgrace and infamy. Too many are ready to claim a liberty of fol-

“on those sentiments, which have so often deceived me? Does not guilt always spring from that pride, “which prompts us to despise temptations? and when we defy those dangers, which have occasioned “our fall, does it not show a disposition to yield again to the same temptation?”

“They therefore, who confide least in themselves, are the safest to be trusted.”—*Lct. cxli.*

lowing the effusions of their own hearts in such instances as these before us, who would immediately acknowledge and censure the impropriety of such a behaviour in their partner for life. But by what rule do they act thus?—not that golden one of “doing as they would be done by.” The story of Werter therefore is full fraught with destructive and immoral tendency; and every idea of more than the most transient compassion for his fate must in the eye of reason and judgment be reprobated by every one, who is a friend to domestic tranquillity or conjugal fidelity; as well as by every one, who thinks evil of suicide. If we are to be guided through life by our unruly passions, we submit; but if reason, if religion ought ever to step in between them and our actions, we must reprobate the principles, the sentiments, the catastrophe, contained in [u] the “Sorrows of Werter.”

But it is further urged in defence of its publication—“that it is a true story.”—Perhaps so;—but what is that to the public? Is the public to be tormented with the extravagancies of every individual’s feelings, and particularly when those feelings were exercised in a manner so detrimental to the peace and good order of society? Is it not by means of these injurious publications, that the mischief of an evil example is extended far beyond the grave of a wretched victim to the fury of his passions?—Curiosity is awakened at the relation of a true story, and an additional compassion is excited, though misplaced perhaps and pregnant with evil. This tenderness for the object concerned (especially when excited by his being the author of his own piteous tale) is apt to insinuate itself, till we lose sight of his weaknesses and follies, and even gloss over his vices, which perhaps were the real causes of all his distress and at length of his self-murder. When the tale is told in piteous terms as having really happened, we feel an unwillingness to censure that conduct, which was all along culpable, though apparently interesting, or to condemn, as forcibly as

[u] The English translator from the German says in his own preface;—“It differs also from a common novel, because of its simplicity; Werter being the only correspondent. You see him in that distracted situation of mind so common to our countrymen, that we are proverbially the jest and pity of foreign nations.” Should not then a moment’s reflection have led this translator to have considered, that such a book as this, calculated to feed such a natural distraction of mind so agreeably and warmly, was one of the worst presents he could make to his countrymen? and that if this very propensity and distraction leads us to be the jest of foreigners, a book warmly recommending and exemplifying its practice ought to be deemed most pernicious and detestable?

we ought, that dreadful and sinful exit, which closed the horrid scene. But with respect to suicide, the only point in which it should be held up to public view, is that of reprobation and confirmed abhorrence; otherwise whilst our pity is doing the miserable object no good, our palliation of his enormous crime may be working infinite mischief in the breasts of others. The glossing over heinous offences under the specious pretexts of acute feelings, tender sensibilities, and violent attachments, is only countenancing the dangerous and destructive idea of giving way to such an irritability of the passions, as must ever be deemed the bane of all social and private happiness. Besides that many are ready to shelter themselves under the plausibility of the example, without even having these poor shadows of excuse to plead. In this light, all posthumous publications, which are calculated merely to excite generous and tender feelings in behalf of some horrid act of ungoverned passion, taking its rise perhaps in the encouragement of lawless love, or adulterous connexion, and terminating in misery, murder, suicide;—that aim at making us weep over the man, but forget the poison of his erroneous example;—such publications are truly dangerous and worthy of severe reprehension. This sort of compassion, which is entirely useless to the departed object, only serves to weaken the cause of virtue, by blunting the edge of our horror at guilt; we pity, we forgive, and on due occasion are ready to imitate. To say therefore that it is a true story, as it serves to excite additional curiosity, makes more “against” than “for” the propriety of its publication. Delicacy would prevent a mention to the private connexions of the self-murderer, let the public be treated with the same considerate indulgence. Let the offender and his offence be consigned, as soon as may be, to their merited oblivion. Better had the “Sorrows of a Werter” been buried in his own grave than sent abroad into the world to excite an useless and undeserved compassion, at the expence and hazard of virtue and of life in others. The evil contagion of his example would have had less influence both in extent and duration, by being but partially known and soon forgotten. For however wisdom may teach, prudence warn, and judgment discriminate, yet the magnetism of example attracting within the sphere of inclination will too often prevail over [x] all.

Such

[x] It is with much concern, that the author here thinks himself obliged to notice the “too favourable light,” in which two ladies of poetic fame, describe the “faults” of Werter: since their truly elegant

Such then being the powerful influence of evil example in general, and such the pernicious tendency of a Werter's in particular, the publication of these impassioned letters cannot but deserve the most pointed censure. Their ensnaring contents should be marked with much severer reprobation than is to be found in the translator's preface, who speaks with a gentleness more favourable to the cause of ungoverned passions than expressive of a zeal for the dissemination of virtue. "It is not to be wondered at (says he) if we sometimes meet with irregular ideas, with sentiments of religion tinged with extravagance. Religion

elegant and plaintive warblings would have been capable of doing justice to piteous tales of more "innocent" misery.—The following delicate lines are addressed to the reader in the "Sorrows of Werter," a Poem, by Amelia Pickering, 1788.

Should some sweet nymph, perhaps as Charlotte fair,
Read without scorn these pages of despair;
Some happier Werter give the vacant hour,
To mark the woes of love's destructive power;
Ah! let them pause on this display of woe:
"O'er Werter's sorrows pity's tears should flow."
Ah! let them pause on this distressful tale:
"O'er Werter's errors draw oblivion's veil."
Remember'd, but to mark the fatal end,
Where love's ungovern'd passions blindly tend:
To curb impatience; better hopes impart;
And point the moral to the feeling heart.
"Though honour plac'd in Werter's heart her throne;
"Though weeping virtue markt him for her own—
"Nor virtue's shield, nor honour's arm could save,
"Love's wretched victim from an early grave."

It has been shown how far, and no further in a moral light, we should pity the sorrows of a Werter. The danger has also been shown of thus lowering the standard of right and wrong, by giving "soft names" to crimes of magnitude—and such Werter's certainly were.—The nature and short extent of Werter's "honour and virtue" have been sufficiently pointed out; but it is hard to conceive, that "virtue's shield and honour's arm" would not have protected him from an early, voluntary grave, had he really made any use of them, in the way they plainly pointed out and earnestly recommended, viz. "absence."

The other authoress to be mentioned here is the plaintive Charlotte Smith; who seems to have bestowed too much honour on Werter, by penning no less than "Five" of her tender elegiac sonnets in the person of Werter.—The last of these is supposed to have been written by him just before his death; which though well adapted to the feelings of its supposed writer, yet tends but to increase and give

“ gion had made a deep impresson on the bosom of Werter, but perfection is
 “ not the lot of humanity. Nature had infused too strong a proportion of
 “ passion in his composition : his feelings, like those of our Chatterton, were
 “ too fine to support the load of accumulated distress; and like him, his diapa-
 “ son closed in death. Reader, take not offence at his expressions, but return
 “ thanks to Heaven for having placed in thee a mind less susceptible of frailty,
 “ and more passive to the behest and intent of thy Creator.”—To thank the
 Almighty for not having laid us under the necessity of enduring severe and ex-
 traordinary trials, is a becoming act of gratitude on our parts; to entreat him
 to make us passive under his behests, and to give us strength and patience to suffer
 whatever He may be pleased to inflict on us, is our bounden duty:—but to

give a sanction to the misplaced compassion excited by his death, and to furnish fresh palliatives in the
 cause of suicide.—The choice of our subject is infinitely more important than the tenderness of our
 thoughts or warmth of our expressions.

S O N N E T. XXV. WERTER speaks.

Why should I wish to hold in this low sphere,
 A frail and feverish being? wherefore try
 Poorly from day to day to linger here
 Against the powerful hand of destiny?
 By those, who know the force of hopeless care
 On the worn heart, I sure shall be forgiven,
 If to elude dark guilt and dire despair,
 I go uncall'd—to mercy and to heaven!
 O thou to save whose peace I now depart,
 Will thy soft mind thy poor lost friend deplore,
 When worms shall feed on this devoted heart;
 When e'en thy image shall be found no more?
 Yet may thy pity mingle not with pain,
 For then thy hapless lover—dies in vain.

Let a stanza from Warton's beautiful ode on suicide answer the above sonnet.

Forbear, fond bard, thy partial praise,
 Nor thus for guilt in specious lays
 The wreath of glory twine:
 In vain with hues of gorgeous glow
 Gay fancy gives her vest to flow,
 Unless “truth's” matron-hand the floating folds confine.

thank

thank him, because we have a mind less susceptible of frailty, and are more obedient to his commands than some other particular individual, seems to be arraying ourselves in a self-confidence that borders on presumption, and to be assuming a certain proportion of righteousness, which favours much of pharisaical arrogance. Wherefore the following address to the peruser of the "Sorrows of Werter" seems better calculated to expose and correct their latent poison, than the gentle strictures of the translator above.

Reader, be cautious what degree of approbation thou bestowest on these favourite letters of Werter. For whatever compassion their pathos may have raised in thy breast, rest assured, that the principles of their hero were erroneous, his sentiments faulty, his expressions frequently blasphemous, and his character highly censurable: since the man, who caused so much domestic uneasiness, and "voluntarily persevered in so doing," can scarce be deemed honourable or virtuous. Attend to his own confession in his last letter, "how ill he had behaved to Albert, and how he had destroyed the peace of Charlotte." Reader, be satisfied, that in his life he was not only useless to himself or society, but a destroyer of the peace and happiness of others; and in his death unexemplary, presumptuous, and sinful. Reader, weigh well his conduct in the scale of propriety, sense, judgment, religion; and then determine on the nature and extent of its offensive qualities. Reader, beware, lest by compassionating the fall of Werter, thou art inveigled into demurs and doubts, whether there be so much offence in indulging an "innocent passion" (as it is called) towards an unattainable object? whether a man may not "love" the wife of his friend, and she "return" his affection, without any diminution of honour on his part towards his friend, or deviation on hers from the strait line of conjugal duty?—Beware, lest by interesting thyself in the cause of Werter, by pitying the dreadful dilemma into which his imprudent conduct had brought him, and the distraction of mind to which it had reduced him—thou also shouldest ever be tempted to think (like him) that thou art at liberty to deliver thyself by death from those troubles, which were the unavoidable consequences of thy own conduct; and so thou shouldest leave the world unbidden and uncalled, without having employed thy youth, thy health, thy talents, to any one useful purpose to thyself or others. Reader, take offence at the general scope and design of these insinuating letters, which are calculated to ensnare innocence, under the

idea of extraordinary purity in love, to endanger virtue and conjugal fidelity, under the plausibility of friendly attachment. Take offence also at many particular sentiments and expressions, which smile with contempt on prudence, defy common sense, and scorn the suggestions of deliberation and judgment:—and all for what?—to exalt in their room the effusions of the unguarded heart, the distractions of misplaced sensibility, the rage and tyranny of unrestrained passions. Take heinous offence at that mode of reasoning, which disdains even to shelter itself under the fury of the passions, or a sudden gust of despair in excuse for suicide; but determines, that its commission shall appear to be the result of coolness and deliberation, an act of the most dispassionate moment of a perturbed mind. Take disgust at those impressions of religion, which led to no good practice in life, which inspired a man with no better thoughts of heaven than of a place, whose joys would be insipid, till he was joined there by the object of his earthly affection. But if the impetuosity of love be still to be pleaded in bar of all these objections—Reader once more take heed, how thou indulgest an attachment, which from the first moment thou knowest to be unattainable and unlawful in its object; left in feeling the “Love,” thou be at length brought to imitate the “Madness” of the miserable Werter.

But there is no need of going out of our own country, or even from the days of our own experience, for an example of most wretched sorrow, which was also one of most public notoriety. For of the many instances of intended suicide and accomplished murder, which occur from the unbounded rage of love and jealousy, none perhaps ever raised a more general horror, because none was ever more revengeful, pointed, and public, than the design of the frantic Hackman against his own life, which ended in the atrocious murder of the object of his love. His story also (or it would not have been introduced on this occasion) has been given to the public in a series of letters supposed to have passed between himself and the unfortunate object of his attachment; to which are added a few letters to his friend and his reflections [v] in Newgate. It is contained in a
small

[v] He says in the speech he delivered on his trial, “I acknowledge “with shame and repentance,” that my determination against my own life was formal and complete. I protest with regard to that truth, which becomes my situation, that the will to destroy her was never mine, till the momentary phrensy overcame me.”—The dismal story, still fresh in the recollection of every one, was this. Hack-

small volume entitled "Love and Madness," first published without a name in 1779; and which has gone through several editions. The author [z] is well known in the literary world, and in his last edition (1786) has subjoined the following account of this volume, and of the motives which induced him to offer it to the public. He tells us in his Postscript—"that Hackman and Miss Reay pass for the writers of the foregoing letters:—that letter lvii. (addressed by Hackman to his brother-in-law after his determination to destroy himself) is authentic; and that the address to the court on his trial given in his page 306 was delivered by Hackman—of the rest the "outline" only is true. That he wishes the following quotation from letter xiv. and also what is said in letter lxiv. to be considered as the reasons, why he thought it advisable to put this volume together on Hackman's account. I can easily conceive (says he in let. xiv.) a writer making his own use of a known fact, and filling up the outlines, which have been sketched by the bold and hasty hand of fate. A moral may be added by such means to a particular incident; characters may be placed in their proper lights; mankind may be amused (and amusement sometimes prevents crimes); or if the story be criminal, mankind may

man being torn with jealousy was determined to destroy himself in the presence of Miss Reay, but seeing her handed out of the play-house by the supposed object of his jealousy, he first shot her through the head, and then attempting the same on himself was prevented by the crowd. He suffered at Tyburn in April 1778, for this atrocious action, with all the sensibility and repentance of which his unhappy case was capable.

[z] The Reverend Herbert Croft; whose labours in literature are now employed in compiling "A new and complete Dictionary of the English Language"—on an enlarged and extensive scale.

It may be of use perhaps to observe to a certain class of readers, who are apt to think, that whatever is written by a "professional" man in behalf of religion is worth little attention, that Mr. Croft was "not a Clergyman" at the time he published this little volume,—in order to take off the edge of H.'s evil example (whose conduct was then the common topic of conversation) and to reprobate the heinous sin of self-murder in particular.—It was a volunteer-fally of "a man of the world" seizing an advantageous moment, when curiosity was broad awake, to exert an effort of genius and imagination in behalf of such serious and religious principles, as might serve to counteract all defences of suicide from this purposed and atrocious example.

To the last Edition of "Love and Madness" (1786) the author subjoins a Postscript, which concludes thus. "To the opinion, which the late Dr. Johnson entertained of these letters, and of the good they might do, the author was indebted for the acquaintance and friendship of that great and good man. This trifle, which, it is hoped, has not been without doing its service, is now inscribed to the memory of Samuel Johnson."

“be bettered through the channel of their curiosity.”—In letter lxiv. a wish is expressed, “that the edge of Hackman’s evil example might be taken off, by letting the world know, how he abhorred all his former ideas of suicide!” In short the ingenious author of these letters has endeavoured to place “a shocking event in a shocking point of view”—and seems anxious through the whole to show a pointed abhorrence of suicide in every shape. How different this from the publisher of Werter’s dangerous letters, to which these may be said to form an instructive contrast in every moral point of view respecting the subject before us.—As these letters paint the same man under the different governments of his reason and passion, with his sentiments on suicide accompanying each situation, a short delineation of these different traits may not be thought unworthy of the reader’s notice in this place. Let it also be remembered, that though the brightness of colouring in these letters belongs to the vigour and liveliness of the editor’s imagination, yet the “ground or outline” on which he works is substantially true [A].

During

[A] It may be worth while also to remark what is made to pass between these two lovers on the subject of Werter. H. was refused a sight of this book by the object of his love (who had a copy of it in the French translation before it was made public in England); because she saw too great a similarity, not only in the situations of H. and Werter, but likewise in the impetuosity of their tempers, and therefore she justly feared a like catastrophe. “The book you mention (says Miss R.) is just the only book you should never read. On my knees I beg you never, never read it! Perhaps you have read it—perhaps—I am distracted! Heaven only knows to whom I may be writing this letter.” (N. B. He was then in Ireland, and she had been disappointed of letters).—He writes back—“Nonsense, to say it will make me unhappy, or that I shall not be able to read it! Must I pistol myself, because a thick-blooded German has been fool enough to set the example, or because a German novelist has feigned such a story?” (See Lett. xxxii, and xxxiii.) He read Werter however, which (as was dreaded) contributed its share of pernicious influence. He was struck with the fate of Werter and wrote verses on it; in which he points out the danger of his example. The following is an extract from Letter lxiii. from Newgate. “Among my papers you will see, my friend, some lines I wrote on reading Goethe’s Werter translated from German into French; which whilst I was in Ireland, she refused to lend me. When I returned to England, I “made” her let me read it. But I never showed her these lines, for fear they should make her uneasy. Unhappy Werter! still less pretence hadst thou for suicide than I. After quietly seeing thy Charlotte married to another man, without so much as offering to marry her thyself—hadst thou a right over thy existence, because she was not thy wife? Yet wast thou less barbarous than I, for thou didst not seek to die in her presence—but neither didst thou doubt her love:—we can neither of us hope for pardon!”—The lines were these, supposed to be found after Werter’s death upon the ground by the pistol.

During the course of H.'s unhappy connexion with Miss R. he experienced periods of violent love and furious jealousy; and the contrast exhibited in diverse parts of these letters between his opinions and sentiments, according as he was guided by rational ideas, or hurried away by passion, is curious and striking. A few passages being collected and set side by side will mark this contrast.

I.

“ In my opinion (says H. speaking of
“ another person's case, before he him-
“ self was a prey to jealousy) to run
“ the chance of being murdered by the
“ new object of a woman's affections,
“ on whom I may have placed my own,
“ or of murdering him (in a duel) is as
“ little reconcileable to common sense,
“ as to common religion.” (Let. xlviii.)

I.

“ Yet I will be, as you shall see, a
“ man, as well as a lover. Should
“ there be a rival, and should he merit
“ chastisement—“ you” will be my
“ friend.” (Let. lv.)

“ If chance some kindred spirit should relate
“ To future times unhappy Werter's fate :
“ Should in some pitying, almost pardoning age,
“ Consign my sorrows to some weeping page—
“ And should the affecting page be haply read
“ By some new Charlotte—mine will then be dead—
“ (Yes, she shall die—sole solace of my love !
“ And we shall meet—for so she said—above)—
“ O Charlotte—(Martha—by whatever name,
“ Thy faithful Werter hands thee down to fame)—
“ O be thou sure thy Werter never knows
“ The fatal story of my kindred woes !
“ O do not, fair one—by my shocking end
“ I charge thee !—do not let thy feeling friend
“ Shed his sad sorrows o'er my tearful tale :—
“ Example, spite of precept, may prevail.”

N. B. The above sufficiently indicates H.'s own opinion of the great danger of publishing such sorrows as Werter's. The editor also of H.'s letters draws up a short account of the circumstances of Werter's life and death, and concludes, “ Werter was clearly a bad man. Had he not died by his own hand, he did not deserve to live. The writer, who either relates or feigns such a story, is not a much better man.”

2. “ Besides

2.

“ Besides the criminality and brutality of the business (of murder and suicide), the folly of it strikes me. What ! because the person, on whom I have fixed my affections, has robbed me of happiness, by withdrawing hers (“ he is also speaking here, before he was jealous himself”) shall I let her add to the injury by depriving me of existence also in this world, and of every thing in the next ?” (Let. xlviii.)

3.

“ Upon no account to harbour the most distant idea of quitting this world (however it may be unworthy of you) lest despondency should at last deceive you into so unpardonable a step.” (Let. li.)

2.

“ What then have I to do, who only lived when she loved me, but to cease to live, now she ceases to love ?” (Let. lvi.)

3.

“ It signifies not, my friend ; your reasoning I admit. Despair goads me on. Death only can relieve me. My resolution is taken. The propriety of suicide, its cowardice, its crime—I have nothing to do with them. Till within this month I thought of self-murder, as you do. Nothing now is left for me, but to leap the world to come. If it be a crime, as I too much fear it is, and we are accountable for our passions, I must stand the trial and the punishment. My invention can paint no punishment equal to what I suffer here. (Let. lvi.)

“ When, my friend, this reaches you, I shall be no more ; but do not let my unhappy fate distress you too much. I strove against it, it now
“ over-

“ over-powers me. You know where
 “ my affections were placed. My hav-
 “ ing by some means or other lost hers
 “ (an idea which I could not support)
 “ has driven me to madness. The world
 “ will condemn, but you will pity.
 “ May Heaven protect my beloved wo-
 “ man, and forgive this act, which
 “ alone could deliver me from a world
 “ of misery !” (Let. lvii.)

4.

“ One would sometimes almost fan-
 “ cy, that many of our suicides studied,
 “ how they might commit this-abomi-
 “ nable crime, so as to be found by
 “ those, whom the discovery would most
 “ affect. Have they wives, children ?
 “ It must be done sometimes in their
 “ presence, in bed with them, often in
 “ their hearing, almost always in such
 “ a manner, as that “ they” may be
 “ the first spectators of it. We know
 “ cruel instances of this sort. O for
 “ Omnipotence to call such savages
 “ back to life, and chain them to the
 “ hardest tasks of existence ! Is not the
 “ crime of suicide sufficient without
 “ adding to it the murder of an heart-
 “ broken wife or child ?” (Let. liii.)

4.

“ All Tuesday after I had finished
 “ my letter to you, my friend, I in
 “ vain sought for an opportunity to
 “ destroy myself in her presence. So
 “ again on the Wednesday all the morn-
 “ ing. In the afternoon I followed
 “ Lord S——’s coach to the play-
 “ house. Now I was determined. After
 “ the play I met them in the Stone-
 “ passage. I had got the pistol to my
 “ forehead, but she did not see me (nor
 “ did any one I suppose) and the crowd
 “ separated us.” (Let. lx.)

Though H. calls down Omnipotence to punish the complete monsters he mentions here, yet how much does he exceed them all in his own desired method of suicide ! It implied the most mean and pitiful revenge, in thus seeking to torture the eyes of her, whom he had called on Heaven to protect, by the
 fight

fight of the horrid act itself, as well as to torment her heart for ever with its effect;—to expose her sensibility—her reason—her life—to the hazard of such a public and dreadful shock.—Such a contradiction is man under the delusions of an ungoverned passion!

5.

“ Suppose I should consume any
 “ other person beside myself. Who is
 “ he that will answer for passions such
 “ as mine? At present I am innocent.
 “ Did you ever read D’Arnaud? I
 “ shudder at the story [B] of Salvini.
 “ O Charles, Charles, as yet thy H. is
 “ no Salvini: nor will I murder any
 “ one but myself. As yet the devil
 “ has not tempted me to plunge my
 “ Eloise along with me into the unfathomable depths of destruction.”
 (Let. lvi.)

5.

“ I am alive and she is dead. I shot
 “ her and not myself. Some of her blood
 “ and brains is still upon my clothes.
 “ I don’t ask you to speak to me, I
 “ don’t ask you to look at me. Only
 “ come hither and bring me a little
 “ poison; such as is strong enough.
 “ Upon my knees I beg, if your friend-
 “ ship for me ever was sincere do, do
 “ bring me some poison.” (Let. lviii.)

[B] The fictitious story of Salvini, as quoted by H. in “Love and Madness,” is as follows.—“Salvini, an Italian, (no Englishman, “could” have committed this crime observes H.) in whose mind my mind discovered its relation, becomes intimate with Adelson an Englishman of fortune at Rome. Salvini accompanies him to England, and is introduced by him to Mrs. Rivers and her daughter, his intended wife. Adelson introduced a rival and a — but you shall hear. Love, who had never before been able to conquer Salvini, now tyrannized over him, as cruelly as he has tyrannized over me. The tale is well worked up. Love leads his victim by degrees from one crime to another, till at last on the day fixed for Nelly’s marriage with Adelson, Salvini murders her and endeavours to murder himself. The attendants preserve him, a further victim to justice. He is committed to Newgate and condemned to death. Adelson bribes a jailor to afford Salvini that opportunity to escape, which he twice refuses. He satisfies human justice by suffering at Tyburn. Adelson and Mrs. Rivers increase his crime, by dying of grief in consequence of it.” The remark of the editor of “Love and Madness” in a note on this passage is as follows. “When I first read this letter, I had never heard of D’Arnaud. I now inquired for such a writer. Still I could not credit Mr. H. who could believe, that poor H.’s story should be related so many years before it happened under the name of Salvini? But so it is. (Epreuves du Sentiment par M. D’Arnaud. Maestricht. 1774. Tome iii. 101.) The circumstance is so remarkable, that a note an hour long might be written upon it. If H.’s story be more complete than Salvini’s, it does but show, that human nature is a better writer than D’Arnaud. He yields, yet yields only to her pen; and even nature appears to have borrowed from D’Arnaud. What a compliment! says the reader. What a writer to deserve such a compliment! says the editor.”

A reflec-

A reflection naturally presents itself on reading H.'s rational sentiments, viz. that when a man is under no temptation to commit suicide, he can argue aptly and justly (because he argues disinterestedly) on its wickedness. Reason then points his determinations. But when the moment of chagrin, disappointment, jealousy, and despair arrives, how do his ideas change with his fortunes ! how does every former argument lose its practical weight and influence ! Passion then usurps the throne of reason, and passion seldom dictates what reason approves. His own words on other occasions shall close the scene of violence by way of reflection. " My passions are a pack of blood-hounds, which will inevitably " tear me in pieces. My carelessness has suffered them to overtake me. At first " perhaps I might have extinguished them, now they rage too fiercely." (Let. lvi.) " O love, love, canst thou not be content to make fools of thy slaves—to make " them miserable—to make them what thou plearest ? Must thou goad them on " to crimes and convert them [c] into devils ?" (Let. xlix.)

It is a great pleasure however to reflect, that H. lived long enough to enable us to trace the restoration of the empire of reason over his wretched heart, after the accomplishment of that atrocious deed, to which he was goaded by the impetuosity of those passions, whose influence he acknowledges with so much dread and horror. " The promises you desire (he writes to his friend from " prison) I most solemnly give you. I will make no attempt on my life. Par- " don me what I wrote to you about the poison. Indeed I am too composed " for any such thing now. Nothing should tempt me. My death is all the " recompence I can make to the laws of my country." (Let. lix.) " My God, " (he exclaims in a paper written in Newgate) my Creator, and first Father ! " well thou knowest, I did not, like too many of thy creatures, ever persuade " myself, that I had a right over my own life." We have seen, how in the very midst of his ungoverned passions, he never wished to defend the principle or lawfulness of suicide (like the more guilty Werter), or to make it appear to be the result of judgment and deliberation. No ; he ascribed his desire of committing it to the unrestrained impetuosity of his passions alone ; nor fought he

[c] H.'s friend, when writing to the general after H.'s death says—" Your memory will I know make you recollect Rochefoucault's reflection—" si on juge de l'amour par la plu-part de ses effects, il ressemble plus a la haine qu'a l'amitie."

to justify the consequences of their irregularities from the imputation of the utmost criminality: and he takes pains to set the world right in that particular, as knowing that many will be too apt to plead "his example" in behalf of a practice he utterly abhorred. The following extract therefore is of real importance; since in this letter he makes all the reparation in his power with his dying breath, towards checking the contagion of his evil example.—"The torture of my situation (writing to his friend from Newgate) is this; that not a word can be said in my favour, unless you will say, I am mad. But God knows, I possess all my feelings and senses much too exquisitely. Yet this is not the part of my crime for which I am always most sorry. Often, very often I consider my crime with respect to the influence it may have upon the world. An example represented in life by vice, has more effect than a precept practised by virtue. No one will imitate me in murdering the object of his love, but I may be considered by despair or by folly, as another precedent in favour of the propriety of suicide. Perhaps if these instances of desperate cowardice did not go out to this country through the channels of our papers, by which means they are laid up, as authorities against a disappointment or a gloomy day, suicide would with less propriety be termed an anglicism. O my friend, could the imperceptible, but indisputable magnetism of this part of my story be destroyed, could my countrymen know, how I abhor this part of my crime, how thoroughly I was ever convinced, (except during my phrenzy) and how perfectly I am now persuaded, that our own lives are no more at our disposal than the lives of our fellow-creatures, I should expire in somewhat less of mental torture." (Let. lxxv.)—Again he writes with a pencil from Tyburn:—"would it prevent my example's having any bad effect, if the world should know, how I abhor my former ideas of suicide?"—The world has been made acquainted with thy dying wish: O that it would forget the evil of thy example, and profit (as thou wast anxious it should) by the horror of thy crimes, the wretchedness of thy sufferings, and the sincerity of thy repentance!

Such then were the effects of insolent and frantic passions: and those, who will hear nothing but at the instigation of these passions, must abide by the dreadful consequences that await their folly. If they will leap the world to come on the excess of any chagrin, disappointment, or trouble, they must needs

hazard the result of so desperate a plunge. The tyranny of the passions is the worst of all tyrannies: but it is by an heedless inattention, a want of care and watchfulness, that we suffer them to establish their uncontrolled power over us. Their fury might have been checked by an early repulsion, but neglected at first they inevitably tear us in pieces. They rack our devoted hearts with every species of torture, till distraction, murder, suicide closes the wild and dreadful scene.

But on reading the wretched fates of an H. and a Werter, a question seems to arise of sufficient plausibility to merit some attention: viz. “whether it may not only be expedient and justifiable, but also commendable, to commit suicide in certain situations, when the impetuosity of our passions might otherwise make us run great hazard of murdering another?”—“If I may not fly (says the man, who is maddened by some violent passion) from my own perturbations and misery, and become a suicide for my own ease and quiet, suffer me at least to consult the repose of others. Let me fly by its safe hand from all that horrid train of evils, in which perchance I may involve others in some moment of my fury;—from those hazards, to which I may be daily exposing the lives of the innocent. Let me become a Werter to avoid being an H.”

This question does not concern the lawfulness of suicide in itself, but only as a choice between two evils, as the supposed prevention of a greater crime. Of two evils the less is certainly to be chosen, and there is an appearance of humanity, as well as of propriety and justice, that the danger and the punishment of any enormous degree of passion, should be made to fall on the person, who harbours the passion, and not on the head of innocence. But the fallacy of the argument seems to lie in the pretended “necessity” of the murder either of ourselves or some other. Our passion perhaps may be bloody-minded in its nature; but as “absence” from the object of our rage or jealousy would certainly secure that object’s life, so “time” would probably instigate us to preserve our own: and thus murder on all hands might be prevented. It is fallacious also in holding out a pretended feeling for others, when we are in fact only gratifying ourselves. It is only an excuse (by which we deceive ourselves) to justify our own impetuosity, our own despair, under the specious pretext of preferring another’s life to our own. Though a Werter pretends to sacrifice

his life to the peace of Charlotte, yet we hear him declaring in the same breath,—“ that the measure of his own misery is complete ; and that he had delayed the “ fatal blow, till he was satisfied it was so.”—His own misery then appears (notwithstanding his assertions) to have had the largest share in his own murder ; and the peace of his Charlotte, or the life of his friend Albert (both of which might have been preserved by less bloody methods) to have been but plausible and deceitful pretexts for its accomplishment. “ Self” then still lurks, notwithstanding all other pretences, in the breast of the suicide ; and it is an attention to his own interests, feelings, and passions, which alone directs the deadly blow.

C H A P. II.

An account of the mixt murder and suicide of Smith and his family in the year 1732.—The letters he left behind him, with reflections on the same.—A similar tragic scene attempted in the family of De Boissy, a French writer and satyrist.—Another at Madras.—An account of Captain Von Arenswald, a German, who killed himself in 1781.—His character :—extracts from his letters.—Remarks on his conduct and principles.—Coolness and composure in its execution no proof of the innocence of an action in itself.—Instances in Felton stabbing the Duke of Buckingham ;—in those who were concerned in the Gunpowder plot —The judgment may be erroneous in self, as well as in common murder.—The secrecy of suicide a proof that it wants justification to others.—The ancients in many instances publicly avowed their design.—Secrecy affected now only to avoid the remonstrances of friends, not from any motives of humanity towards their feelings.—The same reasons in respect of mens’ present opinions and laws against suicide, which oblige us to secrecy, should oblige us also to forbearance.—Cool and deliberate self-murderers are seldom or ever found to rise in their principles above heathen morality, or to admit christian notions of futurity.—Even Arenswald with all his coolness had his doubts and anxieties, as to the justice of his proceedings.—His susceptibility of friendship was the cause of his ruin ; and he wisely cautions us—“ to be on our “ guard against our own hearts.”

THE suicides, who are now about to claim our attention, are of a very different cast from those mentioned in the last chapter; as they will be found to have acted on the result of coolness and mature deliberation, and to have pleaded that very composure, as an argument of the lawfulness of the action.—An horrid scene of mixt murder and suicide, accompanied with great calmness in its execution, was exhibited in the year 1732, in the family of one Richard Smith, a bookbinder. This man being a prisoner for debt within the rules of the King's-Bench, was found hanging in his chamber together with his wife; and their infant of two years old lay murdered in a cradle beside them. Smith left three letters behind him; one of which was addressed to his landlord, in which he says—"he hopes effects enough will be found to discharge his lodging: and recommends to his protection his ancient dog and cat." A second was addressed to his cousin Brindley, and contained severe censures on the person through whose means he had been brought into difficulties; with a desire also that Brindley would make the third letter public, which was as follows.—"These actions considered in all their circumstances being somewhat uncommon, it may not be improper to give some account of the cause:—" and that it was an inveterate hatred we conceived against poverty and rags, —evils that through a train of unlucky accidents were become inevitable. For we appeal to all that ever knew us, whether we were idle or extravagant, whether or no we have not taken as much pains to get our living as our neighbours, although not attended with the same success?—We apprehend the taking our child's life away to be a circumstance for which we shall be generally condemned; but for our own parts we are perfectly easy on that head. We are satisfied it is less cruelty to take the child [D] with us, even supposing a state of annihilation as some dream of, than to leave her friendless in the world, exposed to ignorance and misery. Now in order to obviate some censures, which may proceed either from ignorance or malice, we think it proper to inform the world, that we firmly believe the existence of Almighty God; that this belief of ours is not an implicit faith, but deduced from the nature and reason of things; we believe the existence of an Almighty Being from the consideration of his wonderful works, from those innumerable celestial and glorious bodies, and from their wonderful order and harmony.

[D] Quære, Should they not have thought the same also of their ancient dog and cat,—and rather have killed them than left them to the mercy of their landlord?

" We

“ We have also spent some time in viewing those wonders, which are to be seen
 “ in the minute part of the world, and that with great pleasure and satisfaction:
 “ from all which particulars we are satisfied, that such amazing things could
 “ not possibly be without a first mover, without the existence of an Almighty
 “ Being. And as we know the wonderful God to be Almighty, so we cannot
 “ help believing, that He is also good, not implacable; not like such wretches
 “ as men are, nor taking delight in the miseries of his creatures. For which
 “ reason we resign up our breaths unto Him without any terrible apprehensions,
 “ submitting ourselves to those ways, which in his goodness He shall please to
 “ appoint after death. We also believe the existence of unbodied natures, and
 “ think we have reason for that belief, although we do not pretend to know
 “ their way of subsisting. We are not ignorant of those laws made in ter-
 “ rorem, but leave the disposal of our bodies to the wisdom of the coroner and
 “ his jury, the thing being indifferent to us, where our bodies are laid. From
 “ hence it will appear, how little anxious we are about an *Hic jacet*. We for
 “ our part neither expect nor desire such honours; but shall content ourselves
 “ with a borrowed epitaph, which we shall insert in this paper.

“ Without a name, for ever silent, dumb,
 “ Dust, ashes, nought else is within this tomb.
 “ Where we were born or bred it matters not;
 “ Who were our parents or have us begot.
 “ We “ were, but are not:”—think no more of us,
 “ For as we are, so you’ll be turn’d to dust.”

“ It is the opinion of naturalists, that our bodies are at certain stages of life
 “ composed of new matter; so that a great many poor men have new bodies
 “ oftener than new clothes. Now as Divines are not able to inform us, which
 “ of those several bodies shall rise at the resurrection, it is very probable that
 “ the deceased body may be for ever silent, as well as any other.

(Signed) RICHARD SMITH.
 BRIDGET SMITH.”

When this letter is considered as the whole apology of its authors for a com-
 plicated scene of suicide and murder, it must be deemed weak and futile in the
 highest

highest degree. Its only attempt at argument is as follows. “ Poverty is hateful to us: God delights not in the sufferings of his creatures: and therefore we are at liberty, when we please, to put an end to our own and our child’s life.”—But though poverty be hateful (as it is to every one); though God be good and merciful, and delights not in the sufferings of his creatures; yet a powerful body of argument relative to every principle of natural feelings, to every social, moral, and religious, duty intervenes, to separate the conclusion (“ that therefore we may commit murder and suicide”) from the premises. It is easy to see likewise, how far their principles of religion extended. From his wonderful works they acknowledged an Almighty Creator of the world; but they seem not to have entertained any notion of this Being as its moral governor, still less of his having revealed any part of his will to mankind. They grant indeed an absurdity in the idea of annihilation, but they are very careless, as well as ignorant, of the concerns of futurity. The account then given in this letter of the cause that led to this bloody-minded scene is so little satisfactory, and the principles of its perpetrators so vague and erroneous, that though a compassion may be excited by the thoughts of their miserable end (as they were reputed to be honest and industrious people), yet the catastrophe itself is replete with horror and only worthy of detestation.

The following account is so similar in its nature to the story of Smith, that it is trusted the reader will excuse its insertion here, though the accomplishment of the actual murder and suicide was prevented.—“ Monsieur de Boissy [E], a French dramatic writer and satyrist, did not find himself exempt from the frequent fate of those, who cultivate much acquaintance with the muses.—Being reduced to great extremities, and sinking under the indignities to which poverty is exposed, Boissy had yet too much of that spirit left which characterizes genius, to debase himself by what he deemed mean applications or mendicant letters, though he had friends, whose kindness he knew was not yet exhausted. He therefore took a resolution of quitting his poverty and his life together, by embracing a voluntary death. As he considered this action in no other light than as a friendly relief from further misery, he not only persuaded his wife to bear

[E] M. D’Alembert in his “ Hist. des Membres des L’Académie Française,” &c. 6 vol. 12mo. Paris, 1787, mentions the extreme indigence of Boissy; and that he shut himself up with his family with a resolution of starving.

him company, but prevailed on her, not to leave their child of five years old behind them to the mercy of that-world, in which they had experienced so little happiness. Probably the example of Smith's behaviour under like circumstances, (which had gained much notoriety abroad from its having been recorded by Voltaire) might have some influence over Boissy on this occasion. Nothing now remained but to fix on the mode of their death; which it was at length agreed should be by starving. This not only seemed to them the most natural consequence of their condition (for which indeed it might pass as the involuntary effect), but also saved them from committing a violence either on their child, themselves, or each other, of which perhaps neither Boissy nor his wife found themselves capable. They determined therefore to wait with unshaken constancy the arrival of death under the meagre form of famine; and accordingly they shut themselves up in the solitude of their apartment; where on account of their distresses they had little reason to dread the interruption of company. They began and resolutely persisted in their plan of starving themselves to death with their child. If any one called by chance at their apartment, they found it locked, and receiving no answer, it was concluded that nobody was at home. A friend however, from that kind of instinct perhaps with which the spirit of friendship abounds, began to apprehend that something must be much amiss with Boissy, as he could neither find him at home, nor get intelligence concerning him. Under much anxiety he returned once more to his apartment, and whether from hearing any groans from within, or suspecting something was wrong, he ventured to break open the door. Boissy and his wife had been so much in earnest, that it was now three days since they had taken any sustenance, and they were now got so far on their way to their intended home, that they were in sight as it were of the gates of death. The friend entering into the room, where this scene of death was going forward, found the miserable pair in such a situation as to be insensible of his intrusion. Boissy and his wife had no eyes but for each other, and were not sitting in, but were rather supported from falling on the ground by, two chairs set opposite to each other. Their hands were locked together, and in their ghastly looks was painted a kind of compassion for their child, which hung at the mother's knee and looking up to her for nourishment in its natural tenaciousness of life. The sight of wretchedness did not less shock than afflict his friend. From circumstances what it must mean, his first care was not

not to expostulate with Boissy or his wife, but to engage them to receive his succours, in which he found no small difficulty. Their resolution had been taken in earnest; they had got over the worst and were in sight of their port. The friend however took the right way of reconciling them to life, by making the child join in the intercession. The child, who could have none of the prejudices or reasons they might have for not retracting, held up his little hands, and in concert with him entreated his parents to consent to all their relief. Nature did not plead in vain. They were gradually recovered to life, and provided with every thing that could make them in good humour with its return.

Another instance of the same nature happened at Madras (according to accounts mentioned in the public prints) in the year 1786.—Shaik Soyliman, a private soldier of the twentieth battalion of the Sepoy corps, stationed at Chepank, was tried at the Madras quarter-sessions for murdering Asharibed his wife. The fact being sufficiently proved, the prisoner made the following very extraordinary defence.—“ That he and his family having, from a variety of
“ circumstances, been plunged into an insupportable state of distress, his wife
“ and himself thought death infinitely preferable to the lingering rack of existence: that after debating again and again on the melancholy subject, it was
“ resolved, that he should first destroy their infant-daughter, then his wife, and
“ afterwards himself. This concerted plan was defeated, he said, by his wife’s
“ maternal feelings, who not being able to endure the dreadful thought of
“ beholding the slaughter of her beloved and only child, entreated him to give
“ her first the fatal blow; that in compliance with her request, he put an end
“ to her misery by plunging a dagger in her bosom; and, that whilst in an
“ agony of despair, he was preparing to destroy his daughter, the guards, alarmed
“ by her cries, rushed in and prevented the execution of his purpose.”—The verdict first found against this man was “ Guilty-without malice;” but the court representing the illegality of such a verdict, it was agreed at length to find him “ Guilty”—and strongly to recommend the miserable wretch to his Majesty’s mercy.

The following account of the letters, character, and death of Captain Von Arenswald, who shot himself at Blosswitz in September 1781, is taken from Maty’s Review for October 1783. The letters, &c. were published at Francfort

and Leipzig in 1782 in German, and have not yet made their appearance in an English dress, except as far as they have been noticed in the above Review.—
 “ As there is something affecting (says Maty) and curious in this unfortunate
 “ man’s case, I could not abstain from making an extract from these letters.”—
 The same reason prevails with the present writer to claim indulgence for copying that extract. It will gratify the curiosity of such of his readers, as have not those Reviews at hand to consult, and it is presumed will be easily pardoned or passed over by such as may recollect the account there given. The account is as follows.

“ C. Von Arenswald was captain of the life-guards to the Duke of ——. All, who knew him, are full of his praises, and join in giving him the character of a good, upright, and humane man. He had more understanding and reading than what commonly falls to the share of gentlemen of his profession. His notions of honour were rather overstrained; but in his ordinary conversation he was uncommonly lively and pleasant; and only within a short time of his death discovered a melancholy, which had never been observed in him before. To all these external accomplishments he added the recommendation of a good person, without being an Adonis. He had however the misfortune, and a great misfortune it proved to him, not to be a Christian; but the rectitude of his life, and the simplicity of his manners, shamed many of those, who professed themselves to be such. In his regiment he was adored, and was considered as the father of his men. His ideas of friendship were carried to a degree of enthusiasm scarce ever heard of; and to them he owed his ruin. There happened to come to the town, where he resided, a young man, who was the Alcibiades of his time. The beauty of this young man’s person, the liveliness of his wit, and his universal knowledge, soon gained him admittance into the best company of the town; and all the young men were proud to be known to him and to imitate his carriage. With him and some of their common friends, Von Arenswald soon entered into what they called “ a friendly society.” This order used to have regular meetings, in which they debated upon every topic, read free-thinking books, and sometimes only ate and drank. The peculiar statutes of this order, which was something like a more select and refined species of free-masonry, I never could get at; but I know their peculiar tenet was “ a community of goods.”

“ To

“ To this Von Arenswald owed his ruin. For the stranger, who had made a
 “ great figure and passed himself for a man of fortune, having contracted con-
 “ siderable debts, the other looked upon it as his duty to be bound for him.
 “ The stranger never paid, and in consequence of the sums he was forced to
 “ take up from usurers, Von Arenswald saw his ruin coming on. It was then
 “ that a growing dislike to his profession, a *tædium vitæ* brought on perhaps
 “ in some degree by bodily infirmity, and “ the reading of the Sorrows of
 “ Werter,” (N. B. The editor mentions here another instance of the mischief
 “ done by this book) and some other tragedies that end in self-murder, made
 “ him take the resolution of putting an end to his existence. But he kept it
 “ for several years in his breast, and none of his friends suspected it, till it had
 “ taken effect.

“ On Michaelmas-day of 1781 (which was the day of his death) he went to
 “ court; where he conversed upon indifferent topics with his usual cheerfulness,
 “ and in the evening returned with two friends to Blosswitz. He amused
 “ them with various topics, which as usual were alternately grave and gay; but
 “ at this time the former seemed to have the lead. Arenswald laid himself down
 “ upon the grass, looked at the sky with a steady countenance, and at last broke
 “ out into these expressions:—“ How soon may a man be in a better world!
 “ Perhaps I may know before morning by experience, what it is to be an in-
 “ habitant of heaven.” His friends were then alarmed and asked, what he
 “ meant by it? “ Nothing (says he) but that no man can be sure of his life a
 “ moment.” When they were come to town and had separated, one of them,
 “ from a misgiving that Arenswald might have some bad design, sent his ser-
 “ vant to him; but the man returning and saying, that he had found him at
 “ his desk writing, quieted his fears. Upon Arenswald’s servant (the truest
 “ and truest that master ever had) coming to undress him, he told him to go
 “ to bed; for that he had writing to do and would undress himself. The next
 “ morning, on coming in to wake him, the man did not find him in bed. In
 “ the greatest fright he ran to the alcove, where he had left him writing the
 “ night before, and found him sitting dead in the arm-chair, in the uniform
 “ in which he had gone to court the day before. The pistols were lying at
 “ his feet. They had been loaded only with powder, and nobody had heard
 “ any report; so that like La-Chapelle a few years before, he was stifled only

“ with the vapour of the powder. On the table were several letters sealed, and
“ an open billet for his servant with a guinea in it. In the billet he thanks
“ the servant in the strongest terms for his services, beseeches him not to take
“ his death too much to heart, and bids him carry the letters according to their
“ directions.

“ The honourable servant out of himself with affright thought nothing of
“ the gold before him, but immediately ran to the auditor, to tell him of the
“ news. The judge-advocate immediately took possession of the effects, and
“ sent the letters to the persons, to whom they were directed. As to the body,
“ it was not sent to be anatomized, as its inhabitant had conjectured it would,
“ but was secretly buried in the church-yard. While the servant was gone to
“ the auditor’s, the company, which Arenswald commanded, had drawn up as
“ usual around their commanding officer’s lodging. The consternation of
“ these brave men, when they heard the tragical fate of their fatherly leader,
“ is not to be described. Man never heard of such an host of armed men at
“ once in tears before. They all wept like children. For a long time they
“ insisted on having the liberty to bury him with military honours; but this
“ was impossible on account of the publicity of the self-murder. Only the
“ carpenter of the regiment obtained permission to make him a coffin. Such
“ was the end of a man possessed of the finest qualities of the heart and head,
“ and in the prime of life. He was lamented by every body, as one who de-
“ served a better fate.—Here follow some of his letters, of the authenticity of
“ which I can have no doubt, as the several copies I have seen of them all
“ agree. They are all nearly on the same subject, except that to the young
“ man for whom he had been security; but of this I shall only give the sense.
“ —After blaming him without using any reproachful words, but in the strongest
“ terms, as the ungrateful source of his misfortunes, he acquaints him with
“ the step, which he finds himself at length compelled to take, to break through
“ them. He forgives him entirely the wrong he has done himself, but towards
“ the end conjures him to pay his poor servant, who had lost his wages through
“ this security.—Whether this ungrateful man did kill himself after the re-
“ ceipt of this letter, as I have been assured he did, I have not been able to as-
“ certain.

“ That

“ That Von Arenswald wished for nothing so much, as that the manner of
 “ his death should be concealed from his mother, an old woman of eighty, is
 “ evident from the following letter, which he sent to an officer in the same re-
 “ giment, with whom he does not appear to have been very intimate before.

N^o I.

“ As never, during the whole course of my life, did I make to Edward Hock-
 “ wolgeb a request with which he did not comply ; so I trust he will comply
 “ with this, which will not reach him till I am no more. My wish is briefly
 “ this ; that he will take care the “ manner” of my death reach not my worthy,
 “ and soon eighty years of aged mother. Write to her, I beseech thee, that I
 “ died after two or three weeks sickness, in the course of which I had all the
 “ customary assistances of religion. My only concern has been to live the life
 “ of an upright man ; but having been precipitated into a series of misfortunes,
 “ which indeed I brought not on myself, but out of which no thought has been
 “ able to extricate me, death appears to me far preferable to such a life. Most
 “ sincerely do I wish, Edward Höckwolgeb, that when you are as near death
 “ as I am, you may be able to look back as calmly upon your past actions, as
 “ I do upon mine,

“ VON ARENSWALD.”

N^o II.

“ To the Minister of ———.

“ Your profession obliges you to blame me, but your good heart will love
 “ me even in death. You know how dearly I loved you, and how much it
 “ was the wish of my soul to be good, honest, and upright. God looks to the
 “ will and design of the heart more than to the performance. I thank you
 “ once again for the happy days I lately spent with you. I have had few that
 “ resembled them in the last years of my life. I was pleased from the bottom
 “ of my soul, notwithstanding that the last hour of my life was already fixt.
 “ From this time I have only five days to live. I have thought long and well
 “ upon it, and have found that man must go out of all his sorrows by this
 “ door. Nor is there much difference ; it is as if “ you” went over the Elbe
 “ by

“by Kelgenbrode, and “I” on this side over Geberter—in Meissen we should
 “meet. Yes, we “shall” meet. In the mean time may you live happily here!
 “The world seems to please you; may it please you till your end! I could not
 “die quietly before I had given you this evidence of my sincere love and friend-
 “ship. Fare you well.”

N° III.

“To the Captain of the ———.

“Friend of my soul,

“Une seule demarche hazardée m’a mise à la merci de tout le monde. (Eug.
 “Act. III. Sc. ii.)—If ever there was foundation for uttering this sentence, I
 “have experienced the cruel truth of it. Eight years ago I took one irrevocable
 “step; and all that has followed since, I mean since the instant I took
 “upon me ——’s debts, were consequences that did not depend upon myself,
 “even till the present day of my death. Yes, my good friend, when you read
 “these lines, my soul will be far distant from this body. Look not upon me
 “with contempt for my manner of quitting the world. Did you but know all
 “that I have suffered you would pity me. I now find myself in a maze, out
 “of whose windings there is no other outlet. The step I am about to take
 “is not an hasty one; it has long been in my head and all has been tried
 “to avoid it. Even now there is no hasty despair. For these four weeks past
 “the last day of this month has been fixt upon for the time of my departure;
 “yet always with the steady design to find, if it were possible, some other con-
 “summation. As none has been found, I must embrace this, the only one left
 “me. If I am so copious in explaining the reasons of my conduct, it is only
 “to convince you, that if I have not done right, it is merely from want of
 “power; since if I could have found a better way, I would. I prize your
 “friendship to the day of my death and even beyond. Believe not the cries
 “you will hear raised about me from all quarters. Those, who have been the
 “foremost in my ruin, and have long since made their money again by the in-
 “terest they have received, will be the loudest in their cries. And yet it is a
 “cruel consideration to me, that “any” man will lose “any” thing by me.
 “Yet,

“ Yet, good God, I have not been able to do otherwise ! I have done all in my
 “ power ; but nothing would serve, but I must become the stone torn from the
 “ roof by the wind, to wound every passenger that passed by. What rejoices
 “ me most is, that you will have my company : it is some satisfaction to me
 “ that my men will fall to you. They are right pickt, true, and good men.
 “ That however the possession of a company should be able to make you happy,
 “ is a thing I more wish than hope for. I lament from my heart, that I leave
 “ you behind in a world, where honesty is so far from being an advantage to
 “ any man (I mean honesty in the true sense of the word, not in that we hear
 “ it talked of in all day long) that it does him harm. What pains me the
 “ most at my death is my worthy Handel (the name of his servant), who will
 “ lose by me. I beseech you by all your friendship take him to yourself, for
 “ he is entirely deserving. I am like Socrates, who recommended his children
 “ to his friends. Had I any thing I would bequeath it ; but I have only my
 “ ring, which I have worn eight years on my finger without taking it off ; wear
 “ it and may you fulfil the motto “ *Souvenez vous de moi.*” I have loved no
 “ man more, or with a love more founded on esteem than I have done you. It
 “ is a great satisfaction to me, once more do I repeat it, that my company falls
 “ to you ; for all my men are good, and it rejoices me they will be in good
 “ hands. When you see Lehman, greet him from me, and tell him that I
 “ hope, when he gets me under his anatomical knife, he may strike out some-
 “ thing from me, that may be useful to mankind. Useless as I have been to
 “ every body, (ah, woe is me !) in my life, it is some comfort to me to think
 “ I may be of use after death. The hour of my departure draws near ; my
 “ mind is calm. I think often on him, who to the last moment of his life was
 “ your Von Arenswald.”

Nº IV.

“ He likewise wrote (continues the editor) a very sensible letter to a young
 “ unmarried woman ; but of this I have seen so incorrect a copy, that as I
 “ am not writing a romance, I shall only attempt a summary of the contents.
 “ After taking an affectionate farewell of her, he gives her the best and wisest
 “ advice, how to gain and preserve the love of her future husband. He then
 “ enters into a detail on the education of children, and the love and reverence
 “ they

“ they ought to be taught to have for their elders: on all which, as well as
 “ upon all the weightiest concerns of life, he says things that would do honour
 “ to the head and heart of a Beaumont. In all this part he goes deeply into
 “ the character of the person he is writing to, distinguishes her faults and vir-
 “ tues, and praises, blames, warns, entreats, and conjures, like a dying friend.
 “ It is impossible for any man, who reads this letter, to keep from love and ad-
 “ miration of the unfortunate young man who wrote it.”

N^o V.

“ My dear Sir,

“ Of all my young friends, you were the person I loved most, with whom
 “ I had the greatest sympathy; nor can I go out of the world without leaving
 “ you a small memorial of my friendship. When this reaches you, you will
 “ receive at the same time the news of my death. You know that I never took
 “ weighty steps without thinking of them, and that my heart was good and
 “ upright. Blame me not therefore for precipitation or despair. I have thought
 “ on it long and deeply, and prefer death to scorn and contempt. I was a true
 “ friend; be one to me when I am gone, and think of me, when the world
 “ has long forgotten me. We shall meet again. After you have shed some
 “ tears of sensibility over my grave, forget not that too inordinate benevolence,
 “ and too little discrimination between the vices and virtues of those, who have
 “ abused my friendship, have been the causes of my death. Be upon your
 “ guard against your own heart, and beware of those men, who have friend-
 “ ship on the tongue, but feel none. Adieu my worthy friend; thine ever.”

N^o VI.

“ Friend,

“ This satisfaction also must I afford myself once more, to converse with
 “ thee before I die. Yes, friend of my heart, when this shall come to
 “ your hands, it will be all over with me. But what shall I be? A weighty
 “ inquiry, which I cannot resolve, but about the solution of which I am not
 “ solicitous. Justice upon the whole there must be, but on this wretched clod
 “ it is not to be found. Man too may, I hope, reach an higher rank. The
 “ step

“ step I take is not an hasty one; it has been thought of for some years, and
 “ was as good as determined on in the pleasurable days we spent together, re-
 “ joicing at your good fortune. For some weeks past the day has been fixt.
 “ Heaven knows with what anxiety I have fought to avoid the cruel alternative,
 “ but in vain. For as long as I can remember, it has been my endeavour to
 “ act uprightly. Fatal will it be, if a single action should make me unworthy
 “ of your esteem. Good night, friend of my heart. I shall sleep only four
 “ times more in this world. Hereafter it is probable we shall not sleep.

“ 25 Sept. 1781.”

“ Friend; the hour is approaching. Believe that there are many moments,
 “ in which I wait impatiently for the winding up; but I have fixed on Satur-
 “ day, and will not shorten any part of the appointed time. If quietness at
 “ the last moment is a proof of the rectitude of any system, then mine is a
 “ good one. No thought oppresses me but that of leaving creditors behind
 “ me.

“ Will our ideas so grow together as we think? The more knowledge a man
 “ has, the better he must be—that does not follow. Knowledge and virtue
 “ may meet, and they often do; but they are not connected and linked toge-
 “ ther, like cause and effect; so that the substratum of the one must be the sub-
 “ stratum of the other. Experience is loud against it; it deposes to the truth
 “ of the verse—*Video meliora proboque—Deteriora sequor*.

“ Adorable Being! Eternal verity, uprightness, and good! I honour Thee
 “ now in dust, and thank Thee according to my power for the prospect.—

“ The friendship of our youth, the most elevated of our perceptions here,
 “ will it also revive again? Will it improve with our faculties? O friend, how
 “ unspeakably will I love thee then, I, who so heartily have loved thee here!—
 “ I trust I need not recommend to thee my Handel. He was more my friend
 “ than my servant.—

“ —The hour draws near—the pistols are loaded, and eleven letters sealed:—
 “ this is ready—and thus ends the life here.—I hope for a better, and am in the
 “ last instant of my life entirely your friend, V. Arenswald.

“ 29th Sept. half after eleven at night.”

This affecting narrative furnishes many useful reflections, and evidently discovers the weakness of such motives and arguments, as could induce a man of amiable and innocent character, not only to embrace suicide with such a settled deliberation, but also to adduce that very coolness in vindication of its innocence. But amid all his accomplishments, and with all his abilities and refined sentiments, Von Arenswald had the misfortune not to be attached to the truths of christianity, and in consequence not to be influenced by its sublime morality. Had his ideas of moral rectitude been formed on the principles inculcated in divine revelation, they would have taught him—"that there was
 " no justice in thus flying from his creditors;—no filial affection or duty in
 " hazarding the peace and perhaps life of a venerable parent, by the abrupt
 " manner of his dissolving his own;—no honour in deserting his fellow-soldiers,
 " by whom he was almost adored;—no credit or gratitude in forsaking his
 " Handel, and thus depriving him of his wages in the midst of his faithful
 " services: but that he should have suffered in patience, have deserted no duties
 " of his station, and have waited in humble hope and confidence, that the
 " innocence of his distress would have one day led to its extrication—if in losing
 " all his substance, he did not also lose himself."—But having not this confidence of hope here, or of reward for his trials and exertions of virtue hereafter—a confidence with which christianity alone inspires its votaries—a false shame for his weakness in having been the dupe of artful knavery, an inability to support with firmness a change of fortune, an irksomeness of living under uneasy sensations, caused a gloom and despondency to prevail over his heart, which led him to shrink from trouble in the prime of life, and to commit an act of irretrievable injustice to society, of inhumanity to his friends, and cruelty to himself.

But the most striking trait of Von Arenswald's case is that wonderful composure, with which he set bounds to the period of his days (if such and such circumstances should fall out) for years before! with which, as those events thickened, he assigned the month, the day, the hour, of his departure! When that day arrived, it exhibited a picture of his remarkable firmness and resolution. Though his notions of honour were high strained, yet he might safely have postponed his bloody purposes without imputation of fickleness, as he had never disclosed to any one his murderous intentions. But the scenes of that day were
 all

all calculated to deceive ;—his going to court with his usual cheerfulness ;—his return with his friends ;—the calm letters, which he wrote ;—the precautions, which he took to prevent noise in the explosion, or shattering of the brains ;—all these circumstances seemed to indicate a determination, that his previous calmness and composure of mind should not even be disordered in the moment, or by the manner of his death. There is something more horrid in all this previous equanimity and circumstantial parade of death, than when it is the momentary impulse of rage and despair. In the latter case we flatter ourselves (and not without reason) that the desperado himself would have shuddered at his rash action, had he but survived the first violence of his passions ; but in the former, the dreadful serenity of the act gives infinite force to the shock and weight of the impression ;—*deliberatâ morte ferocior*. The one may not be altogether unexpected, in consequence of known habits of violence and despair ; but the other strikes home at once at the feelings of affection and friendship in the hour of perfect ease and security. Its example also is more diffusive and dangerous, when known to be the result of mature deliberation, and when its very composure is adduced as an argument of its innocence. “ If quietness at the last moment be a proof of the rectitude of any system, then mine is a good one”—says Arenswald.

Now composure and quietness of conscience in the execution of any purpose is at best only a proof, that the actor himself may be persuaded, that in his own case he is not doing wrong. But it does not always prove even thus much ; since there is many a composed and determined villain, who knows himself to be so, but who has quieted all scruples of conscience by his settled habits of evil-doing. However, we are not engaged at present with evil-minded, but only with mistaken persons. With such, a composure of mind may sometimes be an internal evidence to satisfy themselves ; but it does not proceed far enough to establish the absolute rectitude of the action or system in pursuit. How many have been drawn in by the instigation of others, joined to an enthusiastic turn of mind in themselves, to commit the most flagrant acts of injustice and violence ;—the most horrid and atrocious murders, who were nevertheless so well persuaded, not only of the propriety, but also of the honour and merit of the action, as deliberately to devise and calmly to execute their bloody purposes ! When a Felton stabbed a Buckingham, he was perfectly composed and quiet, as

being well satisfied within himself of the rectitude of his conduct in committing the murder. But was his own composure a proof to any one else of the innocence of the action? He worked up the suggestions of his own personal resentment against the Duke, into a patriotic and religious zeal of his doing service to God and his country by a lawless murder.—Wonderful also was the coolness, the secrecy, the satisfaction and joy, which filled the breasts of the conspirators in the gunpowder-plot. “ We shall stand aloof (said they, see Hume’s Hist.) “ and shall triumph in being the instruments of divine wrath, and shall behold “ with pleasure those sacrilegious walls, in which were passed the edicts for pro- “ scribing our church and butchering her children, tost into a thousand frag- “ ments; while their impious inhabitants, meditating perhaps still new perfe- “ cutions against us, pass from flames above to flames below, there for ever to “ endure the torments due to their offences.” Will any one have boldness enough at this time to affirm, that the inward peace, composure, and exultation of these furious bigots near the moment of executing their horrid plot, was a proof of any rectitude in their diabolical scheme? They are represented too in history, as having their previous conduct liable to no reproach. Why then may not the judgment be warped and thus give rise to the feelings of an “ erroneous” conscience in cases of self, as well as of other, murder?

The persons, who have hastened their own deaths in this cool and deliberate manner, and who have exhibited proofs of the utmost composure in the moment of their departure, have often been men of fair characters and good morals through their previous life:—men, whose afflictions and sufferings have not been the effects of their own follies and vices, but brought on them by the misconduct and treachery of others. When such unavoidable misfortunes fall on a soft and susceptible mind, its sensibilities are so alarmed and its firmness shaken, that it sinks an easy prey to disappointment, grief, and despondency, unless strenuously supported by the comforts of that religion, which affords consolation to the afflicted, under the assurance of every thing working together for good to the patient endurer. It cherishes that sort of philosophy and turn of thought, which lends its aid to melancholy, and dresses up all creation in the robes of misery and sorrow. It views all things through a gloomy medium, and conceives nothing to exist in the world, but confusion, vice, and treachery. It is filled with disgust at the present scene of life, and feeling no reproaches

from within to disturb its future prospects, it looks with no disquietude towards a future existence. Hence it easily persuades itself—"that an honest heart has little to do in a dishonest world; and that therefore there can be no harm or impropriety in retiring from a life surrounded with care, perplexity, and sorrow into a better world." Thus a man buoyed up with conscious integrity, abhorring vice, and not experiencing the just fruits of his virtues;—falling moreover into unmerited difficulties and actual sufferings, unheeding of the principles of christianity, and unrestrained by its practical influence on the conduct, calmly determines on and coolly executes the horrid purpose of a sudden deliverance from the burden of his life.

Such a partial judgment as the above may satisfy a man to himself, who is not guided by christian principles; but as self alone is consulted or concerned in the decision, he will scarce convince others of the propriety of his conduct. Indeed it plainly appears, that he himself thinks it not a sufficient justification, because he sculks from an open avowal and dares not reveal his design to his best friend. For why such secrecy, if it were a business of acknowledged innocence and propriety? Distinguished suicides of old acted not thus covertly. They frequently proclaimed their purpose, argued with their friends on the subject, held conversations full of energy and virtue, and then retired from life in what manner best pleased themselves. There was a candor at least and a dignity in this mode of proceeding, which showed them not to be ashamed of, or to fear disclosing the purport of their hearts. This was a method apparently more honourable and praise-worthy than privately to sculk out of life under a cloud of deceit, secrecy, and darkness; and then to leave some posthumous defence of the action in the shape of essays or letters, whose contents their writers did not dare openly to avow while living. If humanity to friends be pleaded in wishing to conceal the fatal resolution, it is very doubtful, whether a previous intimation of the intention would not in many cases be less inhuman? It might afford some consolation to the feelings of affection and friendship, to have had previous opportunity of administering its best and warmest advice in hopes of prevention; and it would be some preparation for the tidings of the dismal catastrophe. But in fact, it is futile to plead the regards of humanity towards others, in behalf of the previous concealment of such an action, as in its own nature so suddenly and violently tears asunder every bond of domestic and friendly union.

union. The evil effects of this precipitate stroke on the feelings of his friends being not experienced by the suicide himself, he allows it not its due and important weight. He flies himself from all the horror of the scene, and leaves his affectionate connexions to bemoan alone his miserable fate. A communication of the designed event to any one must have involved himself in a share of the troubles, the tears, the sorrows of others; from all which he wished to be relieved for his own sake more than for theirs; as these tender importunities might have staggered his resolution and have disturbed the serenity of his departure. For it can be no real principle of humanity, or unwillingness to interrupt the peace of others (since the action itself so totally contradicts all such motives) but a desire of not being forced to participate himself in their affliction, a fear of interruption, or of not being able to defend the deadly deed, which throws a veil of deceit and mystery over the dark foul of the deliberate suicide.

“ But (it is replied) antiquity thought favourably of suicide: it was deemed “ an indifferent action, which brought no reproach on its performer, but was “ often esteemed of honourable execution;—and “ therefore” there was no need “ of previous concealment.” True; this might sometimes be the case. But if the general ideas of mankind be changed for the better, as having acquired new degrees of illumination; if self-murder be not now defensible in its principle; if it be censurable in common opinion and stigmatized by law; the same reasons, which plead the necessity of “ secrecy,” should plead with more efficacy the necessity of “ forbearance.” A man of nice honour scorns to be guilty of that in secret, which he dares not openly avow.

Upon the whole then, nothing more can be allowed to the argument of cool premeditation and composure in suicide, as a proof of its rectitude and innocence, than that a man may in some cases judge erroneously and yet be satisfied with his own judgment. Still less can any general conclusion be drawn in its favour from the partial examples of a few composed individuals; since if example on either side were suffered to outweigh reason, it would much oftener be found on the other side of the question; so that a conclusion might fairly be drawn of the heinous crime of suicide from the rashness and impetuosity with which such numbers plunge into its unfathomable abyss.

But

But however this coolness may strike some few individuals in favour of suicide, its abettors on this ground are never found advancing in their religious sentiments beyond the philosophy, or ethics of a tolerable heathen. With respect to futurity, such calm suicides profess to have little expectations from it or knowledge about it. "When this shall come to your hands (says Arenswald, and he speaks pretty nearly the language of the best of the fraternity) it will be all over with me. But what shall I be?—A weighty inquiry, which I cannot resolve, but about the solution of which I am not solicitous. Justice upon the whole there must be, but upon this wretched clod it is not to be found. Man too may, I hope, reach an higher rank."—An Academic philosopher could scarce have said less, a Socratic would have added much more in behalf of his future prospects. The sublime principles of the christian system can never be found among these suicides, because these would have taught them to exert all that composure and firmness in "bearing" evils, which they affect to maintain in "flying from" them.

But though Van Arenswald was perhaps as cool and pre-determined a suicide through a number of years, as is to be found on record, yet even "he" had his difficulties, his sorrows, and his perplexities, as to what he was about. His anxiety [F] to prevent his aged mother from knowing the "manner" of his death, shows him to have been possessed of some humane and affectionate forethought. But had he determined to have lived in obscurity or even in distress, rather than to have hazarded the effect of bringing her grey hairs with so much sorrow to the grave, his humanity and his duty would have displayed themselves in much brighter colours. What exertions he had used to extricate himself out of his pecuniary difficulties do not appear. But it cannot well be supposed, that a man so amiable in his manners, so universally beloved, and so innocently distressed, would not have met with some of those instances of friendship in his own behalf, a compliance with which in himself towards an ungrateful and treacherous object had brought him into all his troubles. Yet high strained notions of honour probably interfered, and rendered him too proud in spirit to be beholden to any friend for succour in the time of his own pecuniary distress. He

[F] Werter also had his anxieties about his mother. "Pardon me, says he, my dearest mother. Console her griefs, my friend."—See our anxiety to keep the manner of a suicide's death a secret from his family, and the reasons of it in Part II. C. i.

would

would have esteemed a life of generous obligation to have been a life of slavery ; a life of poverty, a reproach ; and death preferable to either. He seems disturbed (and justly so) at the thoughts of flying from his creditors ; of injuring in particular his faithful servant by depriving him of his wages. He was an “honourable” man ; but the idea of committing such injustice was less prevalent in his breast than of that shame and disgrace, which he wrongly conceived must attend unmerited poverty.

One lesson however of importance may be learned from his horrid catastrophe, which exemplifies also some points that were aimed at being inculcated in the strictures on Werter’s tale of sorrow ; viz. the danger of encouraging an unguarded sensibility, and of listening to the unrestrained effusions of a susceptible heart.—“After you have shed some tears of sensibility (says Arenswald) over
“my grave forget not, that too inordinate a benevolence, and too small a discrimination between the virtues and vices of those, who have abused my
“friendship, have been the causes of my death. “Be upon your guard against
“your own heart.”

END OF THE SEVENTH PART.

P A R T

P A R T VIII.

CONTAINING A RECAPITULATION OF THE FORMER PARTS; AND CERTAIN PRECAUTIONS AND PRESERVATIVES PROPOSED AGAINST A TEMPTATION TO THE COMMISSION OF SUICIDE.

C H A P. I.

Recapitulation of arguments tending to prove, 1. The general guilt of suicide.—

2. Its special guilt.—3. Its great accumulation of both on christian principles.—

4. The above conclusions illustrated and confirmed by an historical review of the subject;—by the opinions of ancient philosophers;—by laws and customs of the ancients;—by a particular review of Roman suicide; and by the nature of those ancient examples, which alone were deemed honourable.—5. By its reprobation in the early ages of Christianity;—by the opinions of Fathers and decrees of Councils against it;—by the general mode of its punishment in all christian countries, and especially in our own.—6. By the weakness and futility of modern writings in its defence.—7. Arguments recapitulated tending to evince the great danger of publishing tales of woe, calculated to arrest our sensibility in opposition to our judgment.—Reasons why neither passionate nor deliberate self-murder are defensible.—Conclusion.

THE subject of suicide having now undergone a full investigation, it only remains to draw up a brief recapitulation of what has been advanced, and to propose certain precautions or preventives against its practice; that so the reader, seeing at one view the heinous and complicated guilt of the action, may be more inclined to adopt such principles of conduct, as will exclude all temptation to its commission.

1. If then inquiry be never made into the guilt or innocence of the action of suicide in itself, but only, whether “Lunacy” could be pleaded to take off all responsibility of moral agency, this is a sufficient proof that the action itself (whatever be its causes or attendant circumstances) is always judged to be criminal in a moral agent; so that however pitiable it may be deemed in some cases, it can never be wholly innocent; and the less so, because it is known before its commission to exclude all possibility of actual repentance. Now though it be not consistent with christian charity to suppose, that the Almighty must necessarily be restrained from showing mercy towards such delinquents, as have not the “opportunity and power” to repent of any one particular sin, yet it certainly adds to the heinousness of that sin, which is committed in known and open defiance of such a possibility of repentance.

If self-murder in general arise either from a want of all good principle, or from a false refinement of principle—(the former, through the instigation of the passions, being usually productive of outrageous and desperate suicide; the latter, through the medium of false shame, false pride, false honour, of a sort more deliberative and reasoning in its nature)—it is plain, that it never can spring from any solid, judicious, and rational principles of action, but must be the result of ignorance, weakness, and error.

If the distant preparations of the mind for its commission have been found to be seated in a light and frivolous mode of education, which is more studious to form the manners of the outward man, than to cultivate his understanding and improve his heart;—if there proceed from hence an inattention to moral character, an indolence and effeminacy of spirit, a luxurious and sensual mode of living, and an unbounded sway of the passions;—if these passions unrestrained can be no friends to serious thoughts, moral obligations, and religious duties;—if in consequence those pernicious writings be patronised and eagerly perused, which tend to unhinge every thing that is important and interesting to the happiness of mankind in a future stage of existence; and if from hence the descent be regular and easy into the dark caverns of scepticism and infidelity;—if such be the case, then there is nothing to be discovered in the distant preparations of the mind for self-murder, but what is deceitful, presumptuous, and wicked; nothing

nothing but what tends to hazard all future happiness by such an hasty deliverance from present trouble.

If self-murder committed in consequence of mental perturbation and sorrow excited by the misconduct of others, have to answer for the “effect;” or if perpetrated in consequence of gross misbehaviour in the party himself, have to answer both for “cause and effect,” though not equally guilty in both cases, it cannot be innocent in either. If its immediate harbinger “despair” be a cowardly and pitiful principle of action, then is it at best but a mean and dastardly business.

If every vicious and desperate action should at least be voluntary, and have some pretensions to forward the inclinations and apparent interests of its perpetrator in some shape or other, then must that self-murder be wholly indefensible, which a man is prompted to commit in contradiction to all his own desires of life. But such is the case of many an one, who hazards his own life on certain principles or laws of modern honour—in the “duel” for instance; or who actually puts an end to it on his inability to discharge his “gambling debts.”—If the sort of “courage” also, which is said to discover itself in the very act of suicide, have been proved to be a species of temerity and fool-hardiness, then it not only adds nothing to what is sometimes called the independence and spirit of suicide, but actually depreciates the supposed value of its achievement:—and if further there be more merit in enduring unavoidable troubles with patience than in flying from them, then will true fortitude and magnanimity be discovered to exist on the contrary side of the question; viz. in the continuance of life, not in the refuge of self-destruction.—But if all these points have been proved at large, then may self-murder be truly called the offspring of an evil race of progenitors; and then may its “general” guilt be said to have been perfectly established.

2. Again; if there be gradations in the shock of death, and that by self-murder be most alarming of all;—if in this case there be more hesitation in discovering to relatives the “mode” of the death than the death itself, it plainly intimates, how much the idea of self-murder agitates the human frame, and

excites the keenest feelings of the heart; how much it opposes itself to the first principles and impulses of human nature, those of self-preservation.

If a weariness and distaste of life be contradictory to the pure and genuine feelings of nature, then must the desire of shortening its term by self-murder be ascribed to some extraordinary weakness, corruption, or sinfulness counter-acting that natural solicitude for the prolongation of life: and thus the self-murderer must first stifle the strongest propensities implanted in the human breast, before he can execute his deadly purpose.

If the simplest deductions of reason lead to the idea of an Almighty Being, as the natural and moral governor of the world; and if nothing can be supposed to have been created in vain, or not to form some link of gradation in the universal chain of being—then man, who is ignorant of final effects, cannot be a judge of the importance of his own life, or of the connexion of its duration with his own happiness. This only he knows, that having his part assigned him to perform on the stage of the universe at such a period, he purposely declines and flies from his duty by cutting short the thread of his mortal existence.

If the principle of life and death belong not to man, he has as little authority to accelerate the latter, as ability to produce the former.

If moral imputation imply a state of probation, and that a state of dependence and submission—then all expectation of good or happiness arising from obedience is completely overturned by the impatience of suicide; since it must needs be offensive to our moral Governor in all its principles and influencing motives.

If to consider the state of a man's "present" happiness or misery, be only taking a partial view with regard to his whole existence both here and hereafter, he cannot be a competent judge, even of what may be the complexion of the remainder of his life here from that which it bears at present: and if moreover the sum of his present misery arise (as it too often does) from his own misconduct, then there is a great degree of rashness and presumption in flying to self-murder

murder in a moment of despair; then does he expect in vain the rewards of submission and obedience, when he hastily returns the gift of life into the hands of the bestower, which by his own abuse he has converted into a curse instead of a blessing.

But the Almighty is also offended at any injustice that is committed against the rights of society. If therefore the power of enforcing its penal laws be of the utmost consequence to the welfare of society, it is plain that self-murder is a complete evasion of those laws; and if moreover the “principle” of suicide, or an opinion of its lawfulness, not only teach a man to die “when” he pleases, but also to live “how” he pleases; (since it secures him from all dread of human punishment) what can be more dangerous to the general interests of society, or more subversive of its peace and good order, than to countenance such an opinion? If further, this principle of the lawfulness of self-murder be generally founded on an indifference towards a future state, or a disbelief of its rewards and punishments, then all fear of God, as well as man, being discarded, there remains little hope or expectation of a man’s becoming a good citizen, or rather there is every thing to dread from a want of all restraining principles: since what confidence can be placed in one, who defies man and believes not in God as his moral governor?

If the wealth and prosperity of a nation be supposed to consist to a certain degree in its population, the principle of suicide is a draw-back on that source of its happiness; and though it may be answered with truth, that the natural love of life will act as an antidote against the poison of this principle, yet it is to be considered, that every individual, who entertains thoughts of putting it into practice, ought to remember, that he exerts his own powers of curtailing society of its members, as far as he is able, and that “no one” can plead a right of this nature, to which “every one” has not an equal claim; and that therefore each individual, who presumes to exercise it, is as culpable, as if “all” followed his example.

If every citizen have but a joint property in his own life, then he flies from all his reciprocal duties, and deprives the community of that share of his social services, which is its due, when he takes upon himself to shorten its duration.

If

If also the power of life and death be assigned to the magistrate, the self-murderer encroaches on that power by taking away his own life; and if a life be taken away, neither through mischance nor lunacy, nor the interference of public justice, it is equally "Murder" in the eye of the law, whether it were committed by our own or another's hand. If a citizen then, who led a life of previous innocence, kill himself, he offends against the state in the above points; but if besides he had committed public crimes, and fled from justice by this unwarrantable method, he is still more guilty, as he refuses to make all the reparation in his power by submitting to legal punishment;—and leaves an example also to his fellow-citizens, how they may commit the like crimes with impunity. Such is the offence of self-murder against the interests, the peace, and good order of society in general.

But if its principle be still more disturbing to the repose of individuals and of private connexions than to that of society at large (because these can never be safe from the alarm of such an avowal)—then is the perpetrator of self-murder more guilty on private than on public accounts. If a man can seek refuge himself in suicide from distress and poverty (perhaps of his own bringing on), and leave his family a prey to all its horrors; if by the mode of his death he actually increase that distress upon the fatherless and widow, who became such by his base desertion of their cause, then he can have no feelings of parental or conjugal attachment left, or scarce any principles of common humanity. If the reflection on an union having been happy (though now gone for ever) be consolatory on the loss of a dear friend or relative, how is that source of comfort cut off, when the separation on the one side was voluntary and effected by such frightful means! when it must also be known to occasion such a scene of exquisite sorrow in the breast of the survivor! If a pure and spotless mind always participate the "shame" though it does not the "guilt" of an evil action committed by one dear to it, how is the sinfulness of self-murder increased and aggravated by the poignancy of that grief and wretchedness, which it implants in the heart of innocence! Wherefore that action must needs be highly sinful, by which a man breaks through every tie of humanity and affection, fills a tender and innocent breast with severe distress, and flies from the performance of every social, domestic, and benevolent duty!

But

But supposing all the rights of society and claims of individuals to be set aside ;—if a man's self-interest be not promoted by his self-*assassination*, then it is at least a rash and indefensible step. If it destroy all interests in this world (which however gloomy at present might have brightened up hereafter) in expectation of insensibility, how gloomy is the idea of annihilation ! an idea never taken up, but as an hope of escaping future punishment ! since those, who are not conscious of abused talents or a mispent life, can have no other wish but to exist in a better state. But if the self-murderer's ideas of annihilation or a total insensibility should be fallacious, or if he desperately plunge (as is often the case) without adverting to any other consequence than a mere expulsion of his present pain,—then it has been fully shown, how much he hazards his future happiness if not totally overturns it ; and thus exchanges a transient evil for a state of endless misery.

If the sin of self-murder be moreover increased, by its being an union of many offences in one ;—for if to sin against our nature be one species or symptom of guilt ; to rebel against the authority of God be another ; to offend against the rules and good order of society another ; to injure individuals and family another ; to hurt our own essential interests another ;—then the guilt of that action, which is great in offending against any one of these separately, must be magnified many times by transgressing against all at once : but this is often done in the case of suicide. And if further, to this general combination of guilt an estimation ought to be added of many attendant circumstances ; if it be proper, that special inquiry be made into what “ particular ” duties, public or private, were deserted by this action ? what peculiar claims of honesty, affection, or friendship were defrauded ? what degree of loss or affliction was brought on a family ? what reproach was liable to be thrown on the calling or profession, to which the self-murderer belonged ? what peculiar infamy was merited by himself ? what contempt might be cast on the general cause of morality, or what apparent discredit on religion, through his rash end ?—then may an attention to all these circumstances prove an high aggravation of its guilt : and lastly, if no exception of miserable cases should be allowed in bar of its universal reprehension ; because every self-murderer would apply that case of misery to himself :—if all the above points have been proved at large, and all intervening objections sufficiently obviated :—then has the “ peculiar and special”
guilt

guilt of suicide been abundantly demonstrated, and so as ought to root in our hearts an utter detestation and abhorrence of its practice.

3. It is further manifest, that both the general and special guilt of suicide is confirmed and aggravated by the doctrines and precepts of "Revelation." For if the sixth commandment forbid the commission of murder, it includes (or at least strongly implies) the murder of self, as well as of another. If the general security of our neighbour's peace, happiness and life, be intended in the commandments of the second table; and if that peace, and even that life, be endangered in many shapes by an encouragement of the principle of self-murder; then it must be virtually, if not expressly, prohibited under the general term of murder.

If the whole scope and tenor of the Gospel exhibit one uniform argument against this practice in its clear revelation of a future state, as a state of rewards and punishments; in pointing out the present life to be a state of probation, and consequently of endurance; in its assurance of God's providential care over mankind, and that a firm reliance is to be placed on the Almighty's promises of deliverance from trouble, or reward for suffering it; in all those admonitions and precepts, which so strongly inculcate patience, humility, resignation, and submission, as the duties and ornaments of a christian life; then is its sinfulness sufficiently demonstrated in the Gospel, though no where expressly mentioned by name.—But as we are at liberty from the example of our blessed Saviour himself to extend and heighten the moral duties of the Jewish law, it follows, that if the prohibition of self-murder be only implied in the sixth commandment under the old law, it may be supposed to be actually forbidden by the same under the new law:—and if the precepts of the Gospel also contain rules for the regulation of the passions, and a resignation to the divine will in every thing, then is not the spirit and impatience of suicide directly contrary to all such injunctions?

If the characters of the few self-murderers mentioned in scripture were not exemplary enough to give any countenance to its practice; if it were never committed by the best men mentioned in scripture under their severest persecutions and sufferings, neither by patriarchs, prophets, apostles, nor any other
holy

holy men ;—if it be the duty of a christian to promote the glory of God by the piety of his life, not by a voluntary hastening of his death ;—then christians are not on the same footing (as Hume asserts) with heathens, in regard to the lawfulness of suicide. For if the above premises be true, the conclusion clearly follows, that though it might have been excusable in an heathen to have committed it on certain occasions (on account of his want of better information in religious matters) yet it can never be so in a christian : but if it were unlawful at all times in an heathen, it must be so in a much higher degree in a christian—even in proportion to the increase of knowledge and superior illumination he enjoys. But if self-murder have nothing to plead in its defence on heathen principles, when winding up a life of iniquity, much less can it have on christian ; and if when made an act of deliberation and coolness, it argues only on philosophical, not christian grounds, then every circumstance of general and special guilt in suicide must be accumulated and highly aggravated by the doctrines and precepts of Revelation.

4. But to the above natural, moral, and religious arguments in discredit of self-murder many historical matters have been added, which serve to illustrate and confirm the above conclusions.—If the self-devotions, which continue to prevail at this day among many Asiatic nations, have always been of a religious nature, and directed towards a supposed increase of happiness in a future state, then neither can those moderns, who fly to it as a refuge from present misery, make any use of “ their ” example ; nor ought that custom to be too severely censured in them, which only tends to establish a consistency between their principles of faith and their practice.

If vague and uncertain notions of futurity prevented the ancients in general from arguing justly on the subject of self-murder, then can the moderns take no shelter under their opinions and practices, however favourable they may sometimes appear to the cause of suicide. But if those philosophers among the heathens, who entertained the most just notions of the Deity and of a future state, argued also the most closely in condemnation of self-murder, then ought modern philosophers, who are blessed with so superior a degree of illumination, to be ashamed of being behind hand in their reprobation of its practice.—If modern self-murderers be inclined to lift up their heads on the respec-

table authority of the "Stoics," let them first learn to imitate the virtues of a Stoic before they dare to plead the error of his judgment in this his death of supposed dignity. But if the best and most rational sects of ancient philosophers approved the practice of suicide on no occasions; if some other sects permitted it only on some important and dignified ones; but none (except perhaps the worst followers of Epicurus) as a becoming termination of a vicious life,—then has the modern self-murderer of dissipated and abandoned character no pretensions to urge on the score of ancient opinions, as being much in his favour.

If the punishment inflicted on suicide in ancient days were of a severe nature, viz. a refusal of the rites of burial, which was held peculiarly infamous, and was supposed to subject a person to the greatest inconveniences in the shades below;—if the self-murderer found himself joined in this exclusion with the most infamous and detestable characters, and with the greatest criminals,—such as the public and private enemy, the traitor and conspirator, the tyrant, the sacrilegious wretch, and those grievous offenders, who suffered death by being impaled on a cross,—then it is abundantly manifest, that self-murder, when thought at all culpable by the ancients, was deemed a crime of the first magnitude.

If suicide prevailed not much in Rome during the best ages of the republic, if it only gained ground there in proportion, as an irreverence for the Gods and all matters of religion increased; as the simplicity of ancient manners and the firmness of the Roman character declined; and as luxury, sensuality, and corruption reared their baneful heads; then can the modern self-murderer raise no credit to his bloody deed, on pretence of its being a mode of quitting the world, which, from its frequency among that distinguished people at a declining period of their empire, was called the "Roman Death."—If it may be easy to exculpate many ancient suicides to a certain degree on heathen principles, yet the instances of antiquity, wherein its perpetrator obtained any share of credit, can form no plea or excuse for modern self-murderers, because the instigating causes in each have been compared and found to be so much to the disgrace and infamy of the latter.

5. But further; if in taking a survey of modern times it has been found, that though suicide was perpetrated on some few occasions in the early ages of the church under pretext of religion; yet it was only the effect of an erroneous zeal and enthusiasm in some individuals, being far removed from the pure and genuine spirit of christianity;—that for this reason it was censured by the ancient fathers, though they could not but in some instances pity the well-meant, but mistaken ardour, which occasioned it; as particularly in the case of certain virgin-suicides;—that it was universally reprobated by the canons of the church, and a refusal of the rites of christian burial assigned for its ecclesiastical punishment;—that it was taken up also on civil grounds, and that confiscation of property, which only took place under imperial law on certain circumstances of a previous charge of criminality against the state, was extended by the laws of most modern nations to every case of acknowledged self-murder, lunacy alone exempting it from this punishment;—all this is sufficient to demonstrate an universal reprobation of the practice among christian nations. But if these laws against self-murder, which also obtain in our own country, be frequently evaded, this has been made appear to arise not so much from the want of a just abhorrence of the crime, as in pity to the sufferings of an innocent family.

6. To all which may be added; that if when attention was paid to the writings of certain modern philosophers and others, who sought to defend its practice either partially or generally, it were found, that the scholastic argumentation of Donne, whilst he laboured to prove suicide no breach in certain cases of the law of nature, of reason, and of God, was shrewd, artful, and erroneous;—that the smooth periods of Hume in its “general” defence, as not offending our duty to God, our neighbour, or ourselves, consisted in metaphysical subtilities, in mere quibbles and sophisms on the laws of matter and motion, and on the laws and operations of Providence;—then it is apparent, that neither the learning of the schools, nor the subtleties of ingenious sophists, can produce any thing new or substantial in favour of self-murder.

7. Lastly. The evil effects of attempting to arrest our sensibility at the expense of our judgment have been abundantly shown; and as to those examples of passionate self-murderers, who have argued in defence of their outrageous

proceeding, and whose sentiments have been injudiciously made known in the shape of familiar letters to friends or addressees to the public—as their aim at reasoning is solely grounded on the violence of their passions, it is impossible it should produce any thing rational in favour of the action; since reason and passion are so opposite in all their propositions, proofs, and conclusions.—If those men, who after having written with coolness and deliberation in favour of the practice, give themselves up to a voluntary death, without being excited to it by the outrage of any violent passion, can yet urge nothing new in its defence;—if the principal argument they advance—“that the calmness which they experience in the moment of execution, is a justification of its lawfulness”—have been proved of no force;—if the necessary secrecy of self-murder be a strong proof, that it is indefensible, because it dare never openly be avowed;—if passionate self-murderers argue on no principles of reason, if cool and deliberate ones argue only on philosophical or doubtful grounds as to our state in a future life (if they allow one at all), and even the best of them, when it comes to the point, seem to have hesitated as to the strict morality of the action;—then nothing can be pleaded in favour either of precipitate or deliberate self-murder; but it is in every respect, and under every denomination reproachful, criminal, and sinful. If in short neither religious, nor moral, nor philosophical, nor popular arguments can be adduced in its favour, but from whatever motive it proceed (lunatic cases being always supposed excepted) it be contrary to nature, to reason, and to religion, and therefore an heinous crime;—then is there as little foundation for its principle or establishment in theory, as there is pleasure, or advantage, or innocence in its practice.

But if a particular imputation of this crime have been charged on our island (where at least it has been proved to be an increasing evil) then are “We” in particular bound to wipe off the foul stain by refraining from a nefarious practice, which has been proved to comprehend all the properties and horrors of common “Murder,” with the high aggravation of its being committed on a man’s nearest and dearest friend—even on “Himself.”

C H A P. II.

The legislature only capable of declaring its abhorrence of the crime, not of actually punishing the suicide himself.—Ironical strictures on suicide not likely to have much effect—and why.—The practice only to be impeded by a thorough conviction of its impropriety and wickedness.—1. First precaution or preservative—not to think ourselves too secure of never being tempted to its commission; since no one knows what his sufferings in life may be; and it is too late to “begin” to reason against it, when under immediate temptation to commit it.—2. To fortify our minds when in full health and spirits by all arguments against it, and to be ready with answers to objections.—3. To bear in mind the “horror” it excites, even above that of common murder.—4. To reflect on the anxiety we always show to preserve another from self-murder, when we suspect his intentions;—a plain indication that we approve it not in others;—why then should they approve it in us, or we in ourselves?—Reason unbiased in the former case;—passion decides in the latter.—5. Not to be ready to palliate it when committed by others.—Giving soft names to crimes the greatest inlet to vice.—In the present case compassion useless to the criminal, dangerous to others.—A person, whose intentions are suspected, should be gently treated, in order to reconcile him to life; but when the action has been committed, it should be constantly reprobated.—6. To consider, that suicide is not the effect of enticements from company, fashion, &c. but is solitary, selfish, and secret; a sufficient proof that it cannot be justified to others.—What cannot be justified ought never to be committed.—7. To reflect that its lawfulness ought to be clear to a demonstration, because it is not only an irrevocable, but an irremediable action, which cannot admit of reparation or repentance:—this should be a strong caution against its commission.—8. To adhere to firm principles and suitable conduct.—9. To bear in mind, that the principles of religion teach us not to rely on our own strength alone, but to trust in divine assistance and the care of Providence:—that we suffer justly, when in consequence of our own misconduct;—that when we begin to be weary of life we should inquire, what duties remain to be performed?—that practical benevolence is a never-failing one;—that even the dregs of life are not useless, but may prove our own submission, and make us ex-

amples

amples to others of patient endurance : and that all these considerations are so many preservatives against self-murder.—10. Not to forget that good principles should be followed up by good practice ; but that the union is not indissoluble—reasons why :—yet sooner or later the effects of good principles will be manifest.—11. To remember, that religious principles enforce “ temperance and employment ”—two grand preservatives against self-murder.—The powers of the mind and body so intimately connected, that “ both ” must be attended to in order to preserve “ either ” in a proper state.—The uses of temperance and employment to preserve a due tone of body and mind, and to banish all temptations to suicide.—Intemperance in all pursuits frequently productive of precipitate and frantic suicide.—Inactivity of the mind often terminates in melancholic suicide.—Impossible to answer for the fatal effects of a melancholic soul joined to an enervated body.—Temperance and employment the palladium of health, contentment, and happiness.—They are mutually supported by and give support to religious principles.—The means of temperance produced by manual labour in the poor and industrious ;—the exercise of temperance in the rich gives opportunity and taste for intellectual improvements ; which are to be wrought into useful and benevolent practice.—Intemperance and idleness the bane of every thing that is praise-worthy, and the frequent causes of self-murder.—12. The practice of benevolence a never-failing source of employment and happiness.—Reasons why it will induce us to wish for a continuance of life.—The spirit of benevolence totally opposite to the spirit of suicide ; and therefore the cultivation of the former most efficacious to prevent all temptation to the latter.”

THE several points, which have undergone a full discussion in the body of the inquiry, having been drawn together in the last chapter, in order to set the joint folly and guilt of suicide in its strongest light, the design of the whole work will be completed by a proposal of such precautions and preservatives, as seem most efficacious to counteract all temptations to its commission. Many of these likewise are to be found dispersed through the preceding parts, but will here be collected into one view, with such additional observations as appear pertinent and useful.

The punishment, which the legislature is capable of holding out against the perpetration of self-murder, can only act in the shape of a public abhorrence of the crime, in the way of prevention or striking terror into others ; since the criminal

minal himself is fled beyond the reach of human judicature. It is also much to be feared, that he, who can previously reject all such motives as should induce him to live, will be but little influenced by any threats of subsequent stigmas on his memory. However it certainly behoves every legislature to express its just abhorrence of the crime, by holding forth the memory of its perpetrator to reproach and infamy. But as this point has been treated at large [A] in a former place, the design of these concluding pages is to discover the turn of thought and habit of action, which is best adapted to preserve from a temptation to the commission of self-murder; or in other words to prevent those causes, which give it frequent birth.

Some attempts have been made in short essays to treat this subject ironically, [B] in hopes of lessening its practice by rendering it ridiculous. But though merit is due to every attempt of exhilarating the spirits by descriptions of humour, in order to drive away the demon of gloom and melancholy; yet a vein of raillery is better adapted to subjects of a more indifferent nature. It shines more in its attacks on the foibles and follies of mankind than on their vices; since the former are at all times proper objects of ridicule, whereas the latter demand a more serious exposure: and the suicide in particular is of too dark [C] and sullen a temper to be laughed out of his bloody purpose. The only substantial hopes of impeding the progress of this deadly practice, must be grounded on establishing a thorough conviction of its impropriety and wickedness; which conviction may be confirmed by an attention to the following precautions in the turn of our thoughts and management of our conduct.

I. We should not think ourselves "too secure," that we may never be tempted to self-afssination. Security is often the bane of virtue; and he, who defies temptation, is most likely to fall under it, when it comes in his way. It is not sufficient to say—"I love my life too well ever to part with it willingly." You may think so now in the midst of health and prosperity, of gaiety and

[A] See Part V. Chap. ii.

[B] See some of these passages collected in the notes, Part V. C. v.

[C] "Seldom he smiles, and smiles in such a sort,
As if he mock'd himself, and scorn'd his spirit,
That could be mov'd to smile at any thing."—SHAKESPEARE.

pleasure,

pleasure, and therefore you may spurn at the idea of suicide;—not perhaps through any conviction of its guilt, (having never thought much about it) but merely as it would be a despoiler of your present enjoyments. But no one knows the afflictions and sufferings that may await him through life; and therefore no one can presume to determine, how far at some future period of his life he may “wish” for death; and consequently how far (if not confirmed in good principles and a previous abhorrence of the guilt of self-murder) he may be tempted to shorten his days of grief and misery. It is probably too late to begin reasoning against suicide, when under actual temptation to commit it; when influenced by those impassioned feelings, which will certainly bias all argument, and stifle the decisions of cool judgment.

2. Wherefore it behoves us in the days of full health and strength, of pleasure and enjoyment, not to be backward in fortifying our minds against any future temptation, by impressing on them a full conviction of the guilt of self-murder, by a frequent reflection on all the general and forcible arguments that decide against its practice. It is unnecessary to repeat them here, as they have been so amply discussed in the body of the work. We should also study the answers that have been made to the cavils and objections of its defenders, lest at some future period of less ease and composure, these objections should strike us as new and forcible, and thus acquire an undue influence over us, when pleading on the side of inclination and passion. But it will be said perhaps—“Of what use is it thus to fortify our minds with arguments against suicide in the days of ease and comfort; since many believe it to be a crime, when under no temptation to its commission,—all whose opinions and sentiments of the matter change with their fortunes and sufferings?”—Or rather (it may be replied) their practice now must be said to contradict their principles. For it is not so much the opinions and sentiments that are really changed, as that the man is now under the influence of some strong passion, to which he yields up all his sense and judgment; and that he is determined to lay every thing aside that stands in competition with his bloody purpose, which is to get rid of life and to hazard all consequences. When a man commits common murder, it is not because he has altered his opinions and thinks it no crime; but because being instigated by wicked passions or wicked purposes, he is determined to risk all that may follow. This therefore only affords a stronger proof
of

of the necessity of enforcing both the first and present precaution: since if not only they, who thought themselves “secure” from its after-commission, by being satisfied that they never should be tempted, but even they, who were once firmly persuaded of its criminality, may yet be brought to commit it through the violence of passionate feelings—how much more easily would the same persons have been led to its perpetration (perhaps on the most trifling occasions) had they never beforehand thought it guilty, or fortified their minds by arguments against it? They would perhaps then have defended and even gloried in a deed, which now they perform at best in horrid doubt and disquietude.

3. But beside the general arguments against self-murder arising from the nature of man, his moral obligations, and religious duties, there are particular observations striking home on every individual, which we should do well to notice, and to allow them their full force and energy. We should not then suffer ourselves to forget the immediate and strong impressions of disgust and abhorrence, which seize our souls, when we first hear of the action in another, or by chance view the body of a self-murderer. The feelings that are incited on such occasions are very different from those, which attend a common murder by the hands of another. Human nature revolts more at the idea; our grief is more pungent and our horror is more thrilling:—a plain proof, which ought always to abide by us, of the extraordinary [D] detestation that attends the perpetration of self-murder.

4. Again; let it be carefully remembered, how anxious we are to preserve the life of a friend, or indeed of any one, whom we suspect of this bloody-minded purpose. We urge every possible argument against it, and are apt to pity our friend’s weakness, if not to suspect a failure in his understanding, if he listen not to our admonitions and persuasions. There is no man, who would not attempt to ward off the fatal blow from another, however he may affect to argue in theory on its lawfulness, or to claim exceptions for his own case. But why should we be so eager to attempt this, unless we were persuaded he was about to commit an imprudent or wicked action? It is plain we esteem this to be an action of a very peculiar nature, since we trouble not our heads in general with other mens’ follies or vices, when they do not affect ourselves; but suffer

[D] See this horror painted at large in Part II. C. i.

them to take their own course without let or molestation. This however should be a memorial to ourselves, that "we" also must deserve like censures, whenever we find ourselves in like situations. We should always do well to bear in mind, what we think of the guilt and horror of suicide in others, as well as the pains we would always take to dissuade them from it. This plainly discovers, what are our own "unprejudiced" thoughts on suicide, whilst under no temptation to commit it. Our judgment being then removed from the various warpings of inclination or self-interest, is necessarily more dispassionate, free, and unbiafed in its decisions. But since we think it incumbent on others to submit to the awards of "right and wrong," it behoves us seriously to reflect, why we should determine, that the whole system of right and wrong changes its powers and obligations, when applied to ourselves; or why others should not accuse us, with equal propriety as we do them, of weakness, want of judgment, or wickedness, when we refuse our own submission to what we expect from them. In short we should consider, that whenever we become inclined to practise that murder on ourselves, from which we have endeavoured (or should always be ready so to do) to divert others, it is a proof that our own reason is in turn giving way, and yielding to the impressions of some blinding passion or weak despondency, from whose encroachments we ought to guard it with all diligence and circumspection. For is it not highly censurable to suffer ourselves to be guided by some wayward passion rather than by the decisions of sound reason in any important concern of life?—How much more so then in the disposal of life itself?—Yet the intended self-murderer has his answer ready. "How can I be said to be guided by passion, when I have thought and reasoned about the matter so much beforehand? My suicide is an effect of cool deliberation."—It is true, the more deliberate self-murderer cannot be said to be guided by a sudden gust of some violent emotion (like the frantic gamester for instance, when he despatches himself); but if the source of his evil intentions be traced home, it will usually be found to have flowed from some disappointment of a favourite passion, or from some workings and agitations of the mind, which have set calm and dispassionate reason at defiance, as well as smothered the plainest precepts of morality and religion. You have determined not to exist under such or such difficulties and disappointments; and you have endeavoured to make it out to yourself by a train of fallacy and error, (which you mistake for reasoning) that it is incumbent on you, and even a duty, not to live under those

those circumstances. But you act from “feelings” and not from “principle:” by the former of which many a vice of the deepest die may in turn be equally defended; whilst the latter is the true and sole guardian of life and virtue.

5. Another point we should guard against, in order to fix in our minds a just horror of suicide, is a readiness on all occasions to palliate its commission in others; which only tends (without benefit to the party himself) to lessen its general guilt in our eyes. Seeking to palliate crimes, and to give them soft names, is one of the greatest inlets to vice. We should never be induced [E] to lower the “true standard of right.” The compassion we exhibit for the individual, in endeavouring to palliate his offence, insensibly diminishes the horror of the crime itself, and thus without being useful to the deceased becomes highly pernicious to survivors. We ought not to drive a “living” criminal to despair, while there is a probability (with safety to the community) of his being reclaimed and becoming a better member of society. But the self-murderer having driven himself to despair, and perhaps against all remonstrance, must abide by that reprobation, which his conduct has merited. Whilst one, whom we suspect of intentions towards self-murder, yet lives, he should be treated with all possible gentleness and mildness, as the method most likely to work upon his sickly mind, to engage his wavering affections, and to recover in him a desire of life’s continuance. But when once he has completed his deadly purpose, our tenderness and compassion should change its object, and be solely employed in alleviating the distress of those, whose affections and interests he has thus cruelly deserted; while that distress itself, which we see is so poignant in them, should still further rivet in ourselves a fixed horror of self-murder.

6. Another consideration fit to be cherished as preventive of suicide is this;—that a person may be drawn into gambling by company, into duelling by fashion; but that self-murder is unsocial and solitary, and in every shape selfish;—that the intention also must be kept a perfect secret, or every one else will interpose to prevent it;—that we dare not communicate with our most tender connexion or bosom-friend on the subject, because we are sure our inclinations will meet with a repulse.—What a dark and gloomy idea of the soul then must that needs be, how devoid of affection, friendship, and principle, which we are both

[E] See this treated more fully in Part VII. C. i.

ashamed and afraid to trust beyond ourselves, because we are sure it will not only meet with general censure and reprobation, but be incapable of defence by our best friends and warmest advocates—on any other plea than that of madness! But what cannot be justified ought never to be committed; and therefore this “necessary secrecy” should leave [F] a strong impression on our minds of the great guilt of self-murder.

7. Be it further ever remembered, that it is an action not merely “irrevocable” (for so are many other sins also) but likewise irremediable”, and incapable of being followed up by any degree of reparation or repentance. For though, as has been often observed, it would be an intemperate degree of zeal, as well as little consistent with christian charity, to pretend to determine, that every suicide must necessarily incur eternal punishment, because he has committed a crime of which he cannot repent (for want of opportunity); yet we should certainly shudder at the thoughts of engaging in a doubtful business, which we know is incapable of any remedy:—and the use we should make of this reflection is, that therefore all possible doubt or suspicion of its unlawfulness should be removed even to demonstration, before we venture to encounter it. In a debate of life and death therefore, instead of flying from the opinions and sentiments of others (as we constantly do in this case) it should rather seem natural and incumbent on us carefully to seek them out, and never to fail consulting our friends, those especially whom we know to be most anxiously and deeply interested in our happiness. But our not daring to enter into such a communication with others is not only a convincing proof, that we stand single in our opinion, and cannot make it appear good or justifiable in their sight;—but should lead us one step further, and confirm in our minds an idea of the “actual unlawfulness” of self-murder; since what we dare not explain to others, we ought to be satisfied is wrong and sinful in itself.

8. But it is not sufficient to act on the defensive alone, by entrenching ourselves within the pale of general arguments on the sinfulness of suicide, lest we should be surprised and overcome in some unguarded moment. We must also go forth and attack the monster in his own den, and drive him from his strong

[F] See the matter of necessary secrecy in suicide more fully discussed in Part VII. C. ii.

holds of impatience and despair. Now our weapons of offence for this purpose are to be drawn both from our “principles and our practice;” by the former of which we shall be enabled to resist all temptations to suicide should they attack us; by the latter we shall drive away the causes of temptation itself; and by a due mixture of both, obtain a firmness and resolution of spirit sufficient to support us under all difficulties and trials. But such a victory cannot be gained without a firm persuasion of a “future state,” as a state of retribution, of rewards and punishments for the discharge or neglect of moral obligations and religious duties. Such a persuasion alone will enable us to stem the torrent of affliction and misery, will give us strength under all the evils and pressures of life, and support us through the conflict, when life itself becomes burdensome to us. These principles firmly established and deeply rooted will yield their aid and practical influence over all parts of our conduct; and in particular will furnish the following considerations and preservatives against the practice of self-murder.

9. For from hence we shall be led to conclude, that without the consolations of religion man’s best strength is no better than actual weakness; that his powers and resources against the pressure of fore troubles depend not on his own exertions alone, unless supported and confirmed by divine assistance. But the assurance of this aid, with which the principles of true religion furnishes us, not only affords comfort, but gives vigour and confidence to our own struggles; it frees us from those workings and disquietudes of heart, those dejections and melancholy of spirit, which lead a man of unsteady faith to fly from the pressure of extreme distress by the stroke of self-murder.—This religious confidence teaches us to rely on that Providence in which we believe, and to trust in that God, who will either relieve us from our misery here, or reward us for having suffered it hereafter. Hence we shall be endued with all that patience and resignation, that humility and acquiescence, which will remove us at the greatest distance possible from the danger of self-murder.—But if at any time we begin to feel a weariness of life, from whatever cause it may arise, such a firm persuasion of the responsibility of our conduct will lead us to inquire, how much of the trouble we endure has been brought on ourselves by our own misconduct? and the reply will generally afford a weighty argument in behalf of a patient endurance. But if we cannot charge “ourselves” with having been the instru-

instruments of our own misery, the same patient suffering will be the most probable means either of restoring us again to peace and tranquillity, or of entitling us to a rich portion of reward and happiness hereafter. If we be weary of life, a looking forward to that state, whose blessings we would anticipate, must naturally turn our eyes back again on ourselves to consider the chance or probability of our enjoying them; or in other words, must lead us to the reflection before we think of departing—whether we have fulfilled all the duties incumbent on our station, so as to be likely to enjoy these blessings of futurity? But no answer can be given in this case favourable to an abrupt departure, even supposing it was lawful in all other respects. For there is no state or condition of life, in which there are not some duties still left to perform;—for instance, that one of general benevolence or doing good to our fellow-creatures can never have an end; even supposing there are no particular attachments, no friendships, no social or domestic ties to bind us to life—a situation however which most rarely occurs. But even allowing the very worst case possible, that through inveterate and incurable disorders a man is become unfit for all the duties of life, and in every shape an heavy burden both to himself and friends;—“let him kill himself,” says the philosopher;—“let him still live,” says the moral and religious teacher; because even in this case, he has no right to deem the dregs of his life to be utterly useless. He knows not the general purposes of Providence in hanging this rod of affliction over him; but he feels the support and comfort of religion within his breast; whilst his patient endurance of all his pains acts as a bright and shining instance to those about him, of the influence and consolatory powers of that blessed religion, which enables him to suffer with resignation, and to cherish an hope of additional happiness hereafter from his patient submission to present misery. All these considerations, which are the genuine effects of virtuous principles, are so many [G] strong preservatives against the commission of self-murder.

[G] “Just heaven man’s fortitude to prove,
Permits through life at large to rove
The tribes of hell-born woe;
Yet the same power that wisely sends
Life’s fiercest ills, indulgent lends
Religion’s golden shield to break the embattled foe.”

WARTON’S Ode on Suicide.

10. But it is not "principle" alone that will avail towards smoothing the rugged paths of life, and fortifying the soul against the hour of dejection, unless it be followed up by suitable and substantially good practice; and unfortunately these do not always uniformly or necessarily accompany each other. The passions of mankind, the pleasures and fashionable habits of life too often combat the strength of good principles and prevail over them, at least for a time. One great cause of this seems owing to that intolerant spirit of persecution, which is raised against the interests of religion, by not allowing it the smallest share of polite [H] conversation. Were the moral and religious principles of actions "sometimes" suffered to have their chance of discussion, when they might occasionally arise, like other indifferent topics:—were they not instantly discarded (if accidentally started) with a degree of contempt and sarcasm, and their casual mention considered, as necessarily introductive of gloom and dejection, as fit only for severe meditation, for the recluse or the enthusiast;—were there not such distinctions made in the fashionable world between men of parts and breeding, and men of virtue and religion—as if the latter was a character incompatible with the former, or the former had an exclusive right to be considered as the only desirable one:—but on the contrary, were the idea properly countenanced of the very possible union of these two characters; and that in such an union the most distinguishing marks of worth were to be acknowledged, the most amiable manners displayed, and all the best qualities of a citizen or mem-

[H] The author wishes what he means by the casual introduction of religious conversation (among other subjects) into polite companies, to be interpreted by the following quotation from an incomparable little volume entitled, "Thoughts on the Manners of the Great," &c.—Anon. 1788, Duod. p. 82.

"Nothing perhaps (says that writer) more plainly discovers the faint impression, which religion has really made upon our hearts, than this disinclination, even of good people, to serious conversation. Let me not be misunderstood. I do not mean the wrangle of debate; I do not mean the gall of controversy; I do not mean the fiery strife of opinions, than which nothing can be less favourable to good nature, good manners, or good society. But it were to be wished, that it was not thought ill-bred and indiscreet, that the escapes of the tongue should now and then betray "the abundance of the heart:"—that when "such subjects" are casually introduced, a discouraging coldness did not instantly take place of that sprightly animation of countenance, which made common topics interesting. It were to be wished, that such subjects were not thought dull "merely" because they are "good;" that they had the common chance of fair discussion; and that parts and learning were not ashamed to exert themselves on occasions, where both might appear to so much advantage."

ber of society exerted;—were these notions once permitted to be generally esteemed gentlemanlike and fashionable, a youth of ingenuous birth and virtuous education would stand a better chance at his first entrance into the world of making his “practice” correspond with his “principles.”—The warm effusions of a benevolent heart, an ingenuous modesty, a bashful piety would then meet with its due countenance, protection, and applause; and thus all that was amiable, good and virtuous would be confirmed and strengthened in his yet untainted breast. But as the matter now stands, such a well-disposed youth (through fear of shame and contempt) is led to conceal what he believes and values in his heart, to dissemble his virtue, to countenance vice in others, till he falls insensibly into the practice of every irregularity and impiety of fashionable observance.—His resolution being thus shaken, and the barriers of virtue and vice thrown down, his practice is soon at variance with his principles; and the latter are lulled asleep for a time, if not totally discarded and forgotten.

Yet let it not be urged, as a consequence flowing from what has been here lamented, “that it is therefore to little or no purpose early to inculcate good principles, which are likely to be so soon overturned;” since on the contrary it is of so much the greater importance to do it, by how much the temptations are stronger to which young men of fortune and fashion are exposed. For though some may entirely fall off through the seduction of wicked example, yet many retain their integrity and virtue throughout, and many more “return” to those good impressions, which they received in early life, after a temporary secession from their influence and authority. But these last (who are many in number) would never have possessed any principles at all to which they “could” have returned without the aid of such early instruction. The effects of a virtuous education break forth in various stages of life; sometimes earlier, sometimes later: but it rarely happens, that if life be continued to a moderate length, these valuable impressions do not exert a powerful influence at [1] some period

[1] The famous Dr. Cheyne (and he is but one of many in the same situation) gives the following account of himself, and of his return to the influence of early good principles, in his book entitled “The English Malady, or a Treatise of Nervous Disorders”—in the part entitled “The case of the Author.”

period or other.—But if this should have appeared too digressive from our point, let us return to consider how good principles naturally prepare and caution us to

“ I passed my youth (says he, page 325, &c.) in close study, and almost constant application to the abstracted sciences (wherein my chief pleasure consisted) and consequently in great temperance and a sedentary life. Upon my coming to London I all of a sudden changed my whole manner of living; I found the bottle-companions, the younger gentry, and free-livers, to be the most easy of access, and most quickly susceptible of friendship and acquaintance; nothing being necessary for that purpose, but to be able to eat lustily, and to swallow down much liquor; and thus constantly dining and supping in taverns, and in the houses of my acquaintances of taste and delicacy, my health was in a few years brought into great distress by so sudden and violent a change. On this occasion all my bouncing, protesting, undertaking companions forsook me, and dropt off like autumnal leaves. They could not bear it seems to see their companion in such misery and distress, but retired to comfort themselves with a “cheer-upping” cup, leaving me to pass the melancholy moments with my own apprehensions and remorse. Even those, who had shared the best part of my profusions, who in their necessities had been assisted by my false generosity, and in their disorders relieved by my care, did now entirely relinquish and abandon me; so that I was forced to retire into the country quite alone, being reduced to the state of Cardinal Wolsey, when he said, “that if he had served his Maker as faithfully and warmly as he had his prince, He would not have forsaken him in that extremity;”—and so will every one find, when union and friendship is not founded on solid virtue, and in conformity to the divine order, but in sensual pleasures and mere jollity. I retired (I say) into the country, into a fine air, and lived low.—While I was thus forsaken by my holiday friends, and my body was, as it were, melting away like a snow-ball in summer, being dejected, melancholy, and much confined at home, by my course of mineral medicines and country-retirement, I had a long season for undisturbed meditation and reflection (my faculties then being as clear and quick as ever) which I was more readily led into, in that I concluded myself infallibly entering into an unknown state of things. Having had a liberal and regular education, with the instruction and example of pious parents (who at first had designed me for the church) I had preserved a firm persuasion of the great and fundamental principles of all virtue and morality; viz. the existence of a supreme and infinitely perfect Being, the freedom of the will, the immortality of the spirits of all intelligent beings, and the certainty of future rewards and punishments. These doctrines I had examined carefully, and had been confirmed in from abstracted reasonings, as well as from the best natural philosophy, and some clearer knowledge of the material system of the world in general, and the wisdom, fitness, and beautiful contrivance of particular things animated and inanimated; so that the truth and necessity of these principles was so riveted in me, as never after to be shaken in all my wanderings and follies: and I had then the consolation to reflect, that in my loosest days I had never pined to the vices or infidelity of any, but was always a determined adversary to both. But I found that these alone were not sufficient to quiet my mind at that juncture, especially when I began to reflect and consider seriously, whether I might not (through carelessness and self-sufficiency, voluptuousness and love of sensuality; which might have impaired my spiritual nature) have neglected to examine with sufficient care;—if there might not be more required of those, who had had proper opportunities and leisure; if there might not, I say, be higher, more noble and more en-

to cultivate such a line of conduct, as will best secure us from all temptation to the commission of self-murder.

lightening principles revealed to mankind "somewhere;" and if there were not more encouraging and enlivening motives proposed, to form a more extensive and heroic virtue upon, than those arising from natural religion only (for then I had gone little further than to have taken christianity and revelation on trust) and lastly, if there were not likewise some clearer accounts discoverable of that state I was then (I thought) apparently going into, than could be obtained from the mere light of nature and philosophy. Such were my reflections in this my melancholy retirement, and this led me to call to mind, which, of all my numerous and various acquaintances, I could wish to resemble most, now in these my (to me seemingly) approaching last moments; and who among all those of my particular acquaintances was he, who being of sound natural, and duly cultivated parts, had most strictly and constantly lived up to their convictions, under the commonly received principles, and plain consequences of christianity. In a word, who it was I could remember to have had received, and lived up to the plain truths and precepts contained in the gospels, or more particularly in our Saviour's sermon on the mount. At that time among many whom my memory suggested to me I fixed on one, a worthy and learned clergyman of the church of England, sufficiently known and distinguished in the philosophical and theological world (whom I dare not name, because he is still living, though extremely old); and as in studying mathematics, and in running over (as I was able) Sir Isaac Newton's philosophical works, I had always picked out, and marked down the authors and writings mostly used and recommended by those others, and by him, because I thought they could best judge of such; so in this case, the more quickly to settle my mind and quiet my conscience, I resolved to purchase, study, and examine carefully such spiritual and dogmatic authors, as I knew this venerable man did most approve and delight in. In this manner I collected a set of religious books and writers of most of the first ages since christianity, recommended by him, with a few others of the most spiritual of the moderns, which have been my study, delight, and entertainment in my retirements ever since; and on these I have formed my ideas, principles, and sentiments; so as, under all the varieties of opinions, sects, disputes, and controversies, that of late, and since the earliest ages, have been canvassed and bandied in the world, I have scarce ever since been the least shaken, or tempted to change my sentiments or opinions, or so much as to hesitate in any material point. This tedious, perhaps impertinent circumstance I mention, because the fright, anxiety, dread, and terror, which, in minds of such a turn as mine (especially under a broken and cachectick constitution, and in so atrocious a nervous case) arises, or at least is exasperated from such reflections, being once settled and quieted, "that" after becomes an excellent cordial, and a constant source of peace, tranquillity, and cheerfulness; and so greatly contributes to forward the cure of such nervous diseases. For I never found any sensible tranquillity or amendment, till I came to this firm and settled resolution in the main, viz. "To neglect nothing to secure my eternal peace, more than if I had been certified I should die within the day: nor to mind any thing that my secular obligations and duties demanded of me less, than if I had been ensured to live fifty years more."—This, though with infinite weakness and imperfection, has been much my settled intention in the main since."

11. Two grand objects, which will be enforced on our attention and practice by the strength of virtuous and religious principles [κ] are “temperance and employment:”—a due conjunction of which, as indeed it will defend us from many a vice, so it will form also our greatest preservative against all temptation to the commission of suicide, by banishing its causes. Trite is the observation (but not therefore less true or useful) that the powers of the soul and body during their present union are intimately connected with each other;—that sickness in the one produces imbecillity in the other; and that neither can perform its due functions, or be capable of strenuous exertion, without the aid of its associate: from whence arises the duty of taking care of both, in order to preserve the strength and vigour of either. But this strict dependence on each other is perhaps in no instance more conspicuous than in the case of suicide; previous to which an enervated body debilitates the powers of the understanding, or a gloomy turn of thoughts relaxes the tone of the corporeal organs, till the health and soundness of both being destroyed, that miserable lassitude and dejection of spirits ensues, which so frequently terminates in this bloody catastrophe.

Now as “temperance”—or a propriety and moderation in every pursuit—tends to preserve the body in due health and strength, so “employment” calls forth the faculties of the soul; and thus being both preserved in due order, they reciprocally tend to heighten and invigorate each other’s activity. But while the body is in health and the mind in action, the man is safe; or in other words, there is little fear or probability of self-assassination. The great hazard of its temptation arises, when we so far forget all practical obedience to our good principles, as to become careless and negligent of cultivating this true palladium of comfort and happiness. When we allow ourselves to wallow in sensuality; when we submit to the usurpation of blinding passions and inordinate affections; when we destroy our constitutions in the immoderate pursuit of lawless pleasures; in short, when we become “intemperate” in all things, we are easily led into the commission of that frantic and criminal species of murder, which in a moment of vicious disappointment or desperate distress, precipitately rushes on

[κ] Temperance is here to be interpreted on its largest scale; according to Tully’s definition of it in his Offices—“as consisting in the due order and measure of every thing said or done”—“in omnia quæ fiunt quæque dicuntur ordine et modo.”

its own accomplishment.—Again; when we are seized with an inactivity of soul, an indolence in exerting or calling forth the powers of the mind,—a satiety of objects about us quickly succeeds; a listlessness and weariness of life follows, which is accompanied by a wretchedness and dejection of spirits, a gloom and melancholy, which frequently terminates in the horrors of suicide. It is impossible to answer for the effects of a dejected and melancholic soul acting on a weak and pampered body. Suffer it then to be repeated again, that temperance and employment are the great bulwarks of health, contentment, and happiness: and as they owe their growth to the culture of virtuous and religious principles, so they contribute in their turn to nourish the root of those very principles, which gave them birth.

Manual labour rewards the poor and industrious man's exertions, by acquiring him the means and enabling him to enjoy all the fruits and blessings of temperance; while the exercise of this self-denying virtue in the man of wealth and independence, gives him both opportunity and taste for the exertion of his intellectual powers. By the help of these he enlarges the bounds [L] of his own understanding, he improves the world in science and knowledge, he conceives schemes of distinguished humanity, and brings them forth in every species of practical benevolence.

But idleness and intemperance are alike the bane and destruction of both rich and poor. In the latter they have a strong tendency to shorten life by the hands of public justice, in the former by his own; and therefore may in both be rightly named the parents of self-murder.—The one can never plead, that there is no necessity for his industry, whilst he has a family, or even himself alone to support by his manual labour;—the other has no better a pretence to indulge in indolence and inactivity, in mere idleness and pleasure, whilst he has a fa-

[L] The pursuits of science, of natural knowledge, of elegant literature are a never-failing source of employment and enjoyment to an independent gentleman. Their good effects (to mention those only which concern our present point) are manifest both in protecting him from an intemperate pursuit of pleasure, and in furnishing him with the means of resisting indolence, languor, and ennui.—*Hæc studia adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis perfugium ac solatium præbent: delectant domi, non impediunt foris; pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur.*

mily to rear in a course of virtuous emulation, dependents to crave his protection, the cries of the poor to arrest his humanity in various shapes, the interests of friends to promote, or a country to serve. He is set up on high to be a bright and shining pattern of all that is useful, amiable, and virtuous: and that God, who gave him his wealth and independence on earth, is gracious enough to declare himself a debtor for all such service, as this his steward shall pay to the interests of humanity and benevolence.

12. The interests of humanity and benevolence then are never-failing resources of exertion and employment for the man of independence. The pursuits of these afford the mind a constant scene of comfortable reflection; they are pleasures of exquisite taste and sensibility, which neither fade in speculation nor decay in practice. The employments of humanity will “demonstrate” to us, that if at any time we be inclined to think our own lives miserable, we shall find there are others, whose are more so; but whom notwithstanding we should advise to live in hope and patient suffering. But these interests of humanity, when espoused with sincerity and warmth, instead of tending towards any irksomeness or weariness of life, lead us to cherish that existence with a fostering care, which is the cause of so much comfortable reflection: and thus our own lives appear important to ourselves, in proportion as we know them to be valuable to others. In short, the spirit of practical benevolence is so opposite in every respect to the spirit of suicide, as to be most efficacious in counteracting its baneful propensity. The one is employed in enlarging its affections and in extending its beneficial purposes towards all mankind; while the other contracting itself within the narrowest compass, is wrapped about and entrenched within its own personal feelings. The one stretches out the ray of that circle, which is to enclose its sphere of action, to its greatest possible extent, so that in its revolution it may comprehend the most ample space;—while the other is continually circumscribing the line of its actions and affections, and shortening its length, till the whole becomes a mere point, having shrunk into the center of self.—As the promoter of self-murder therefore lays in no store of happiness from without, so he is able to procure none from within; his mind being internally filled with horrors, disquietudes, and distractions, which continually prey on his health and spirits, till he flies for supposed refuge into the bloody

bosom of suicide. While the man of benevolence, conscious that he lives for the good of his fellow-creatures, and fulfils the most endearing and amiable duties of his station, is stored with inward peace, satisfaction, and comfort. By these means, as he has a foretaste of "future happiness," so he is unwilling to hazard its future enjoyment by any act of impatience;—he therefore waits with submission the allotment of Providence for the time of its full and perfect completion.

END OF SUICIDE.

A
T R E A T I S E
O N
D U E L L I N G,
AS BEING A SPECIES OF
S E L F - M U R D E R.

Ferrea Vox.———VIRG.

———Honourable

Without the stamp of merit.———SHAKESPEARE.

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A
T R E A T I S E
O N
D U E L L I N G.

C H A P. I.

BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE RISE OF THE ANCIENT DUEL; ITS PROGRESS
AND VARIATIONS.

C O N T E N T S.

Difficulties of the moral writer, who is to encounter fashion and honour; yet truth to be respected above both.—The duel took its rise in the ages of ignorance, superstition, and Gothic barbarism.—It was a species of ordeal trial among the Goths for the discovery of truth, where other methods failed: and victory was deemed the test of innocence.—The first intention of the judicial combat or duel degenerated into the spirit of self-revenge through the licentious and imperious temper of the feudal Barons.—Necessity of counteracting their tyrannical oppressions.—But the remedy of abuses must be adapted to the stage of civilization in any country:—hence the introduction of chivalry in the eleventh century, which, though it tended to curb lawless ferocity, gave birth to a punctilious refinement visible in the laws of modern honour.—The purpose of chivalry to rescue innocence in distress.—Its tendency to polish the manners from its great connexion with gallantry.—The grounds of the duel, as well as its practice, greatly increased by means of chivalry; the

valorous knight being to fight not only his own, but other people's battles, and also for pure fame of victory.—Tilts and tournaments.—Civilization of manners did not stop the progress of the duel, as might have been expected.—Great encouragement given to it in revenge of private affronts by Francis I. of France.—The duel got to a formidable height before the close of the sixteenth century.

IT is a disagreeable and discouraging task, to undertake the investigation and exposure of a custom of such fashionable and honourable report, as that of “Duelling” is esteemed to be: but as it is so nearly allied to self-murder, it must undergo a review in this work.—Indeed a moral writer, who wishes to be guided in all his researches by maxims of truth and reason alone, must be prepared to encounter neglect, if not ridicule and contempt, whilst he is opposing opinions and customs established in the circles of polite association, though militating against the principles of humanity and virtue. A respectful deference is certainly due to the sentiments and manners of those, who move in the superior walks of life. Their liberal education, exalted connexions, and enlarged mode of living, must furnish them with opportunities of improvement and knowledge, far beyond what can fall to the lot of those in a more private station. This respect however is to be distinct from a slavish submission, inasmuch as a still greater deference is to be paid to the decisions of “truth;” whose conclusions are not drawn from the light and fantastic awards of fashion, but are at all times consistent, uniform, and immutable. Unbiased then by any undue influence of polite habits or of the principles of modish honour, let us attend to the decrees of truth and of truth alone on the subject of the Duel.

It is an extraordinary circumstance and astonishes on reflection, that a custom introduced in the ages of ignorance, superstition, and barbarity, and which seems so intimately connected with the ideas of rude times alone, should have maintained its ground at all, much more that it should still exert such an influence over the manners of polished nations!—The practice of the duel has indeed been much varied in its progress through so many ages; but it is greatly to be feared, that its variations will not be found on the side of its innocence in modern days—a point which shall be investigated hereafter.

Courage

Courage and superstition [A] seem to have been the two ruling principles that characterised the manners of those northern tribes, which overran Europe. From the union of these two qualities, added to an ignorance of all regular systems of policy and jurisprudence, there sprang a species of trial [B] called the "ordeal;" whereof one kind was, "that an accuser was to make good his assertions, and an accused person was to defend his innocence—at the point of his sword;" and it was imagined, that Heaven would interpose in the shape of victory on the side of innocence. These were called "judicial combats;" and there was certainly much agreement between these kind of laws and the manners of the people, who were to be governed by them. For as in these military states [C], whose citizens never debated either on public or private concerns without being armed, cowardice was the greatest of all crimes, and one, who wanted courage to maintain his assertions at the hazard of his life, was branded with infamy; so on the other hand, the impetuosity and violence of courage

[A] The courage of the northern nations needs no illustration; and their superstition (amid other proofs) appears from the following account given by Tacitus, "*De moribus Germanorum.*"—*Est et alia observatio auspiorum, quâ gravia bellorum eventus explorant Germani. Ejus gentis cum quâ bellum est captivum quoquo modo interceptum cum electo popularium suorum patriis quemque armis committunt. Victoria hujus vel illius pro præjudicio accipitur.*—Being thus superstitiously persuaded, that the event of a public quarrel could be adjudged by a single combat, the transition was easy and natural to suppose victory would accompany innocence in private disputes by taking the same method.

[B] "Where differences could not be determined by legal proof or testimony, the party was allowed his purgation, which was either Canonica or Vulgaris. The first, which was by oath, was called Canonica, because it was lawful: the other, which was either per aquam candentem, ferrum ignitum, or duellum, was called Vulgaris, because those methods of purgation were brought in by the barbarous people without the pretext of any law, till the Gothic and Lombard kings, seeing their subjects more addressed to martial discipline than to civil government, reduced those trials to form and rule, the constitutions for which are now incorporated into the civil law. From these northern nations, of which the Saxons and Normans formed a part, it was brought into England: and although long ago it was discouraged and grew into disuse among the Lombards, as soon as they grew civilized in Italy, yet it continued till of late with us, as a mark of our longer barbarism."—See Sir Robert Cotton—Of the antiquity, use, and ceremony of lawful Combats in England, dated May 22, 1601, and printed in Hearne's Collection of curious Discourses from original Manuscripts, printed by Richardson, 1771, Vol. II.—In which volume are many curious papers relative to the antiquity, ceremonies, &c. of lawful combat in England; and also one excellent paper called Duello-foiled by Mr. Edward Cook.

[C] *Nihil autem neque publicæ neque privatæ rei, nisi armati agunt.*—TACITUS, *De Moribus Germanorum.*

was regulated and restrained, by stopping the mouth of deceit and slander, of prevarication and falsehood, under the full persuasion of a divine interposition on the occasion. So far superstition had its use in those days for the prevention of malicious accusations; and so far the principle of the judicial combat was grounded on the best ideas of justice then prevalent, viz. the supposed special interference of the Deity. Such was the rise of the duel or single combat among European nations in private and personal concerns: it has existed, as the historic page informs us, in all ages of the world on the grounds of some "public" benefit; of which the examples are so frequent and so well known, as to need no introduction in this place.

But what was primarily intended for the determination of right, and avoidance of perjury [D], soon degenerated into a species of self-avenging power, which

[D] Whoever wishes to enter more fully into the origin, &c. of judicial combat may consult Montesquieu's Spirit of Laws, Vol. II. 28; or Spelman's Glossary ad vocem Campus; or an entertaining little History of Duelling by M. Coustard de Maffi. But the following account of the ceremonial by Verstegan in his book entitled "A Restitution of decayed Intelligence in Antiquities," p. 64, is concise and clear. "For the trial by camp-fight, the accuser was with the peril of his own body to prove the accused guilty, and by offering him his glove, to challenge him to this trial; which the other must either accept, or else acknowledge himself culpable of the crime whereof he was accused. If it were a crime deserving death, then was the camp-fight for life and death, and either on horseback or on foot. If the offence deserved imprisonment and not death, then was the camp-fight accomplished, when the one had subdued the other, by making him to yield or unable to defend himself, and so be taken prisoner.—The accused had the liberty to choose another in his stead; but the accuser must perform it in his own person and with equality of weapons. No women were admitted to behold it, nor male-children under the age of thirteen years. The priests and people that were spectators did silently pray, that the victory might fall on the guiltless; and if the fight were for life or death, a bier stood ready to carry away the dead body of him, who should be slain. None of the people might cry out, shriek, make any noise, or give any sign whatsoever; and hereunto at Hall in Suevia (a place appointed for camp-fight) was so great a regard taken, that the executioner stood beside the judges ready with an axe, to cut off the right hand and left foot of the party so offending. He that being wounded did yield himself, was at the mercy of the other to be killed or to be let live. If he were slain, then he was carried away and honourably buried; and he that slew him reputed more honourable than before; but if being overcome he were left alive, then he was by sentence of the judges declared utterly void of all honest report, and never to ride on horseback or to carry arms."

Duelling is supposed to have received its first establishment, as an ordeal trial, by a positive law from Gundebald, king of the Burgundians, an. Dom. 501. The purport of the law was as follows.
"Being

which was not only tacitly permitted, but publicly authorised, and its laws and canons accurately defined in most kingdoms of Europe. Indeed in those ages of confined and partial legislation, there would have been as little ability, as there was perhaps inclination, to have impeded the authority of such a self-avenging tribunal. Each haughty chieftain under the feudal system, regardless of all principles of equity and justice (of which indeed he knew little and practised less) and without an idea of submitting his own personal cause to the judgment of any external authority, considered his sword as the avenger of his wrongs, and would not trust to any thing but his own strength and prowess to give him adequate satisfaction. It soon became visible therefore, that this power of self-revenge, independent of its casual issue in determining actual guilt or innocence, would in time be subversive of all regular justice and government, and was moreover rising apace to an height that called aloud for restraint.—Let us go on then briefly to trace the progress and variations of the duel.

In the infancy of the northern invasions all was rude and uncivilized; but when the posterity of these emigrants began to feel themselves well established in their new settlements, the wiser among them naturally turned their thoughts towards the improvement of their internal policy, which they found miserably defective and entirely under the control of an imperious and licentious aristocracy. The judicial combat was a favourable idea with these haughty chieftains, who disdained to submit the decisions of their own causes to any thing but their

“ Being fully convinced, that many of our subjects suffer themselves to be corrupted by their avarice, or hurried on by their obstinacy, so as to attest by oath what they know not, or what they know to be false—to put a stop to such scandalous practices, when two Burgundians are at law, if the defendant shall swear, that he owes not what is demanded of him, or that he is not guilty of the crime laid to his charge; and the plaintiff on the other hand not satisfied therewith shall declare, that he is ready to maintain sword in hand, the truth of what he advances; if the defendant does not acquiesce, it shall be lawful for them to decide the controversy by dint of sword. This is to be likewise understood of the witnesses of either party, it being just that every man should be ready to defend with his sword the truth which he attests, and to submit himself to the judgment of heaven. If one of the plaintiff’s witnesses shall be killed, all the others shall be condemned to pay immediately 300 solidi. If the defendant be overcome, the plaintiff shall receive three times the sum, which he demanded. It is our will and pleasure, that this law be strictly observed and executed, that our subjects may conceive an utter aversion to the detestable sin of perjury. Given at Lyons June 27, Avienus being consul:” (that is, an. Dom. 501.)—See *Lex Burgund.* Tit. 45.

N. B. This law soon prevailed among the Franks and all other nations of Gaul.

own swords. "We submit not our competitions unto the judgment of men" (was the high strain of their language) and even among the gods, we appeal "only to Mars." Regardless therefore of law and magistracy, they committed all manner of outrages and enormities with impunity. They were ignorant and unlettered to a degree of stupidity; they were fierce, untractable, and cruel. Personal valour and the use of arms were the only points they studied; and these they employed to no better a purpose than more effectually to prosecute their brutal appetites and destructive vengeance. They carried these oppressive principles to so dangerous and unwarrantable an height, that few were safe from their lust and barbarity. The administration of public justice was totally impeded, whilst each imperious lord not only made himself the determiner of his own cause, but claimed the sole power of judgment over all his vassals. These he uniformly defended in their depredations on others, but held them himself in the most abject state of slavery. A lordly chieftain seldom appeared abroad in those times, but with a view of plunder and free-booty, or to execute some purpose of revenge or lust. This being accomplished he retired in all haste within the gloom and entrenchment of his impregnable castle; which was equally fortified against the admission of his rival-baron or his lawful sovereign.

These evils were growing intolerable. Every kingdom was distracted by the private quarrels and petty wars of its nobility. It was impossible that any state could have long existed under the rapine and violence, the extortion and anarchy that was daily exercised. But nations and governments (like the human race) have their different stages of civilization adapted to the different periods of their existence. The era of cultivation and polished manners must gradually advance in its own due time; it will no more be forced forward before its proper season than manhood can be immediately grafted upon infancy without passing through the stages of childhood and youth. An Alfred and a Charlemagne seem to have been born out of due time; that is, before their respective kingdoms were sufficiently matured for the reception of such shining characters. But the age of political manhood was not yet arrived, in which a proper remedy could be applied to stop the progress of these enormities through European nations. War and the single combat were still the ruling passions of the soul; and whatever improvement had militated against these favourite and ferocious ideas would have been treated with the utmost contempt and indignation.

Some

Some however, whose minds were more enlightened, endeavoured to turn this torrent of courage and military violence upon itself, and to the correction of its own abuses. They formed themselves therefore into martial societies for the relief of injured innocence and distressed virtue; for the redress of all oppressions and grievances; for the protection of the weak and defenceless, particularly of the fair sex; for the correction of abuses and the general promotion of the public utility and safety. But in compliance with the strong prejudices of the times, all was still to be determined by the sword and by feats of personal valour.

Such was the introduction of "chivalry" and "knight-errantry," which soon caused a remarkable variation in the principles of the duel, as well as a great increase of its practice. Truly just, humane, courteous, and honourable was the institution and principle of chivalry; but in its progress it was liable to many an abuse in the contrary extreme to that which it was intended to correct. It certainly tended much [E] to soften and polish the manners of those ages, which

[E] The following is a short account of the advantages of chivalry, extracted from "Hist. of modern Europe in a Series of Letters," Vol. I. Let. xviii.—"Chivalry considered as a civil and military institution is as late as the eleventh century. The previous discipline and solemnities of initiation you will find in books of knighthood. Valour, humanity, courtesy, justice, honour, were its characteristics: and to these were added religion, which, by infusing a large portion of enthusiastic zeal, carried them all to a romantic excess, which was wonderfully suited to the genius of the age, and productive of the greatest and most permanent effects both on policy and manners. War was carried on with less ferocity, when humanity no less than courage came to be deemed the ornament of knighthood, and knighthood a distinction superior to royalty—an honour, which princes were proud to receive from the hands of private gentlemen:—more gentle and polished manners were introduced, when courtesy was recommended as the most amiable of knightly virtues, and every knight devoted himself to the service of a lady; violence and oppression decreased, when it was accounted meritorious to check and punish them: a scrupulous adherence to truth, with the most religious attention to fulfil every engagement, but particularly those between the sexes as more easily violated, became the distinguishing character of a gentleman, because chivalry was regarded as the school of honour, and inculcated the most delicate sensibility with respect to that point: and valour seconded by so many motives of love, religion, and virtue, became altogether irresistible. That the spirit of chivalry sometimes rose to an extravagant height and had often a pernicious tendency must also be allowed. In Spain under the influence of a romantic gallantry it gave birth to a series of wild adventures, which have been deservedly ridiculed: in the train of Norman ambition it extinguished the liberties of England and deluged Italy in blood; and at the call of superstition and as the engine of papal power, it desolated Italy under the banner of the crois. But these ought not to be considered as arguments against an institution.

which succeeded its introduction: but in checking ferocity it gave birth to punctilious refinement, and sowed the first seeds of that fantastic honour, the bitterness of whose fruits are still tasted in the modern duel. The pursuits of chivalry being warmly encouraged, every youth of distinction was trained in its honourable school; wherein he was taught to consider military fame and personal valour, as the summit of his future glory. But to guard this fame and to distinguish this valour from the rude courage of the vulgar, a new code of punctilious and refined observances was introduced, on the principles of which the laws of modern honour are founded. The grounds also of the single combat or duel were widely extended by the laws of chivalry. For as soon as the future hero was initiated into the high honours of knighthood [F], his life was devoted by the most solemn oaths and religious solemnities—"to the defence [G] of the faith, to the protection of damsels, widows, orphans, and of all persons exposed to violence and oppression." In conformity to which oath the knight now was not only, or even principally, to avenge his own cause, but to be the champion of the quarrels of others also; neither was he to be ready to fight only, when actually called forth, but to signalize himself on all occasions by voluntary combats.

institution laudable in itself and necessary at the time of its foundation: and those, who pretend to despise it, the advocates of ancient barbarism and ancient rusticity, ought to remember, that chivalry not only first taught mankind to carry the civilities of peace into the operations of war, and to mingle politeness with the use of the sword, but roused the human soul from its lethargy, invigorated the human character even while it softened it, and produced exploits, which antiquity cannot parallel. Nor ought they to forget, that it gave variety, elegance, and pleasure to the intercourse of life, by making "woman" a more essential part of society; and is therefore entitled to our gratitude, though the point of honour and the refinements of gallantry—its more doubtful effects—should be excluded from the improvements in modern manners."

[F] "The novice in chivalry was educated in the house of some knight, whom he served first in the character of page and afterwards of esquire: nor was he admitted to the supreme honour of knighthood, till he had given many striking proofs of his valour. The ceremony of initiation was very solemn. After the fasts prescribed, a whole night spent in the church in prayer and in complete armour, the reception of the holy sacrament, and many other religious rites, at which priests and knights assisted, the pupil in arms received the sword and the embrace used on that occasion; devoting himself thenceforth to the defence of the faith, together with that of widows, orphans, and all exposed to violence or oppression."—Hist. of modern Europe, Vol. I. 608.

[G] The popes endeavoured to turn the spirit of chivalry to the aggrandisement of the papal see—in planning the Crusades.

By

By these means the original and confined ground of the duel, as a matter of trial in doubtful cases, where the honour and innocence of a person was at stake, was wonderfully enlarged; and besides comprehending the protection of the defenceless, often extended itself to a defiance between two stout champions eager to experience each other's bravery. They fought not indeed in rancour, malice, or revenge [H]; but in honour of their fair mistresses [I], or for the glory of their respective nations; and an invitation "to break a lance" was as frequent, as one to partake of a public entertainment. Indeed there were no banquets of consequence without an exhibition of such feats of personal activity; they graced the accession of a new monarch, the marriage of a royal pair, the birth of a prince, and in short every public demonstration of joy and festivity. Tilts and tournaments were the common sports and pastimes of the age; and these combats were often countenanced by the presence of the king and his whole court.—When a third Edward [K] and his gallant son, patrons themselves and mirrors of valour, invited knights of all nations to be present at their tournaments; when they gloried in presiding at these awards of martial prowess; when females graced these warlike exhibitions with all the vivifying charms of beauty; when the amorous knight wore on his arm the presents of his favourite mistress—to be resigned but with his life; when he was encouraged by her

[H] The ceremonials of religion used previous to these solemn exhibitions of bloodshed and murder, afford a striking proof of the superstitious ignorance of the times. The combatants chose a godfather (as he was called) whose business it was, to examine and match their arms, and especially to see, that that they had no "enchantments" about them; for these knights were extremely credulous. They then confessed their sins and received the sacrament—previous to their preparing themselves to commit murder. The good Chevalier Bayard (who was termed "the knight without fear or reproach") took care to have a mass celebrated, whenever he went to fight a duel; and himself always knelt down to pray on the spot before he engaged.

[I] See a number of challenges sent by knights of different nations to each other and the valorous combats that ensued in M. Coustard de Maffi's History of Duelling.

In 1414 John duke of Bourbonnois published a declaration, that he would go over to England with sixteen knights, and there fight it out, in order to avoid idleness; and also further to merit the good graces of his fair mistress.—See VOLTAIRE'S Gen. Hist. and State of Europe, Part III. where is much about Duelling.

[K] Chivalry was at its height, and in all its glory in England in this reign, when—"a romantic nation was headed by a romantic king."

preference [L] in the field, and panted to lay the spoils of his vanquished antagonist at her feet, as trophies of his bravery and love;—no wonder that this union of love, honour, and glory should urge the champion on to the achievement [M] of most wonderful feats of valour.

These tournaments continued in high estimation, notwithstanding the loss of so many valorous knights of the first distinction, who perished in them. But the catastrophe of Henry II. of France, who [N] was killed in a tournament gave a mortal blow to these bloody spectacles; and the renown of chivalry also fell with this monarch, to rise no more but in tales of romance. However the spirit of duelling, which had grown up under its fostering wing, was not so easily laid; and it had now arisen to such a fearful and formidable height, as to demand some effectual interference of public authority.

[L] “When Edward III. in 1344 celebrated the magnificent feast of the round table at Windsor, to which all the nobility of his own dominions and of the neighbouring countries had been invited, Queen Philippa and three hundred ladies illustrious for their birth and beauty, uniformly dressed in the richest habits, adorned that solemnity, and were treated with the most pompous and romantic testimonies of respect and admiration. Many of the most magnificent tournaments of these times were the effects of this kind of gallantry, and were designed for the honour and entertainment of the ladies, who appeared at these solemnities in prodigious numbers and from different countries.”—See HENRY’S History of Great Britain, Vol. IV.

“Ladies were said at this time to ride on horseback at the tournaments, dressed like cavaliers with swords by their sides, their horses adorned with rich trappings, and themselves behaving with masculine effrontery.”—Letters on English History.

[M] It is certain, that no combatants of antiquity fighting in more important causes, ever exhibited greater proofs of personal intrepidity and courage, than many of these Knights of Chivalry did in their mock fights.

[N] “Henry II. of France having married his eldest daughter to Philip king of Spain, his youngest to the duke of Lorraine, and his only sister to the duke of Savoy—in honour of these marriages ordered not only balls and masquerades, but a solemn tilting; and resolved himself to enter the lists. For which cause he sent a lance to Count Montgomery, captain of his guards, that he might encounter him. At first Count Montgomery declined it for good reasons; but the king repeating his commands, he was forced to comply. Accordingly next day, which was June 10, 1559, both the king and count came to the place appointed, which was in the street called St. Antony, and there the count purposely broke his lance against the king’s breast-plate; but fatally to the king; for his helmet not being drawn over his face, a splinter of the lance flew up into his eye and pierced through into his brain, upon which he fell from his horse and was carried off. No art could give him any relief, so that he was in great torment till July 10, when he died: and so the mirth of that court was turned into mourning.”—See COCKBURN on Duels, p. 92.

It might indeed have been reasonably expected, that when the light of science began to dawn and government to take a regular and settled form; when the study of the law (after the discovery [o] of Justinian's Pandeets) began to vie with that of arms, as an honourable profession; and the extension of commerce had not only introduced an influx of wealth among the merchant-adventurers (who were a body rising into much political consequence) but had occasioned a liberal intercourse between various and distant nations; when these advantages flowed in apace over Europe, it might have been deemed a just inference, that the barbarous customs of former ages would not even have required the restraints of law, but would have died away of themselves. Such in particular it was to be expected would have been the fate of those usages, which counteracted all principles of equity and justice, and were utterly inconsistent with every idea of a regular and established system of government. But unhappily things took not so favourable a turn in regard to the duel; and the behaviour of Francis I. of France, both in his challenges to his great competitor and rival the emperor Charles V. and in his well-known determination, "that the lie was never to be put up without satisfaction but by a base-born fellow [p],"—added new fuel to the flame of duelling. From this time the increase of the single combat on private and personal injuries was astonishing. The causes of affront were also increased in proportion, and an unguarded word, an haughty look, or a disdainful carriage, were often productive of the most fatal consequences. The subjects of Francis, fierce in their courage, lofty in their sentiments, and punctilious in their manners, now indulged their native propensity to the single combat, under the countenance and even the injunctions of their monarch; who left it to his successors to feel the weight of the growing evil: and a growing one indeed it proved, till it had arrived at a truly formidable height before the close of the sixteenth century. What steps were taken to endeavour to retard its future progress shall be traced in the following chapter.

[o] The first manuscript of Justinian's Pandeets was discovered in the year 1137.

[p] The laws of honour were very accurately studied and defined in the sixteenth century; and laid down with a degree of precision unknown at this day. There were said to be thirty-two species of lies, whose degree of satisfaction was accurately determined.

C H A P. II.

CANONS AND LAWS AGAINST DUELLING AND THEIR EFFECTS.

C O N T E N T S.

The council of Trent severely censures all duels.—In France the practice of the judicial combat first restrained by Philip the fair.—Edict of Henry II. of France against duels.—Reasons given, why this prohibition tended rather to increase than diminish the practice of duelling.—Henry IV. of France issued edicts against duelling at the instigation of the great Sully; which were counteracted by the king's own private encouragement of duels.—Edicts of Lewis XIII.—The famous edict of Lewis XIV. against duels, which constitutes the present law of France against them.—The present state of duelling in France extracted from Mercier's Tableau de Paris.—Restraints on the duel in England.—Account of a judicial combat being demanded and assented to in the reign of Elizabeth, to determine the right of some manerial lands in the Isle of Hartie near Shepey, Kent;—how terminated.—Prosecution of duelling in James I.'s reign.—Speech of Sir Francis Bacon in the Star-chamber-court against it; and also his letter to Lord Villiers.—Ordinance of Cromwell's parliament against duels.—Proclamation of Charles II. engaging to enforce the laws against them.—A bill against duelling brought into the House of Commons in the year 1713 on recommendation of Queen Anne, but dropt after twice reading.—No new laws wanted, but an enforcement of the old ones: these daringly violated.—Great perversion of the verdict man-slaughter, when applied on the duellist's trial for the murder of his antagonist.—A person slain in a duel guilty of his own murder, to which the slayer is only an accessory.—Laws will be ineffectual totally to suppress the duel, till an alteration be made in the principles of modern honour.

THOUGH the church had often issued canons against tournaments and duelling, yet it appears, that they were principally directed against such persons as presumed to fight without leave first obtained from royal or magisterial authority; which indeed it was at all times punishable to do. But the council

of Trent [Q] issued a very strict canon against all manner of duelling, terming it, “ a detestable custom introduced by the devil for the destruction both of body and soul; inhibiting the duel throughout the christian world, as most unbecoming christians; excommunicating not only all those, who fought themselves, but all their associates, and even the spectators of the battle; confiscating all their goods and denying christian burial to those, who were killed in a duel (as being self-murderers in fact). All advisers, supporters, witnesses, or those in any shape concerned are likewise to be excommunicated. Princes also, who connive at duels are to be deprived of all temporal power, jurisdiction, and dominion over the places, where they have permitted a duel to be fought.”

Philip the fair, who possessed the throne of France at the close of the thirteenth century, seems to have entertained at that early period just notions of the evils attending the judicial combat, and to have wished to put a restraint on its practice. But the spirit of the times militated so much against the monarch's good inclinations, that all he was able to effect was the issuing an edict of regulation [R], whereby “ nothing was to be brought to that bloody issue, which could be determined by any other means:” and thus the law of duelling as an ordeal trial seems to have continued in France, till the reign of Henry II. who succeeded Francis I. in 1547. But this regulation during the intervening time seems to have been but little regarded. Neither was it any disapprobation of

[Q] *Detestabilis duellorum usus fabricante diabolo introductus, ut cruentâ corporum morte, animarum etiam perniciem lucretur, ex christiano orbe penitus exterminetur: imperator, duces, principes, marchiones, comites, et quocunque alio nomine domini temporales, qui locum ad monomachiam in terris suis inter christianos concesserint, eo ipso sint excommunicati, ac jurisdictione et dominio civitatis, castri aut loci, in quo vel apud quem, duellum fieri permiserint, quod ab ecclesiâ obtinent, privati intelligantur: et si feudalia sint, directis dominis statim acquirantur. Qui vero pugnam commiserint, et qui eorum “ patrini” vocantur, excommunicationis, ac omnium bonorum suorum proscriptionis ac perpetuæ infamiæ pœnam incurrant; et ut homicidæ juxta sacros canones puniri debeant. Et si in ipso consilio decesserint, perpetuò careant ecclesiasticâ sepulturâ:—illi etiam, qui consilium in causâ duelli tam in jure quam facto dederint, aut aliâ quâcunque ratione ad id quemquam suaserint, necnon spectatores, excommunicationis ac perpetuæ maledictionis vinculo teneantur; non obstante quocunque privilegio seu pravâ consuetudine, etiam immemorabili.—Council of Trent, Session xxv. Chap. 19.*

[R] See the edict in M. Coustard de Massi's History of Duelling.

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the practice on general grounds, that induced Henry to wish its restraint, (for he was himself a valorous knight, and was afterwards killed in a tournament) but because one [s] of his favourites had fallen a victim to it in his own presence. He therefore took an oath never to allow any duel during his reign, and he published an edict to that effect. This seems to have been the first regular and royal prohibition of duelling in France. But notions of punctilious honour had now arisen to such an height, that it was doubtful, whether this simple prohibition of the royal assent did not serve to "increase" the number of private duels. For before this reign trials of this nature were only permitted on serious occasions, or in instances of great personal offence; and they, who offered to fight without previously obtaining the royal permission, were deemed guilty of high treason against the king's authority. But as no such consent was now to be obtained, every man conceived himself a judge of his own case; and dreading the least imputation on his personal courage, he was more ready to stretch the usual points of honour than to curtail them. Honour likewise is of such a delicate and tender nature, as to exert itself most in satisfying those points which are not of strict legal obligation; which sensibility when properly applied is truly amiable and generous. But the same nice texture of honour, which leads the liberal mind to take no advantage of the "silence" of law, should also teach its possessor not to act in "defiance" of law: a line of conduct however not sufficiently marked by the modern duellist, who fights in contradiction to express legal prohibitions. But to return; Henry II.'s prohibition was not much regarded, since pardons were too easily obtained for those, who fought without previous permission.

[s] This famous duel was fought in the year 1547, in the square of the castle of St. Germain before the king and the whole court with the greatest solemnity. The champions were the lords of Chataigneraie and Jarnac, who were neighbours and kinsmen. The cause was the honour of Jarnac's mother-in-law, with whom Chataigneraie asserted that Jarnac held improper familiarity. The lie was given to Chataigneraie's assertions, and supplication made to the king, to order a trial by combat to the last rigour. The ceremonials of this duel are to be seen at large in M. Coustard de Massi's or in Cockburne's History of Duelling. The event was the defeat of Chataigneraie, who not able to bear his shame and disgrace, tore open his wounds after the surgeons had dressed them and expired. The king was so much hurt at the defeat of his favourite (for such he was) that he declared another duel of this sort should never be fought in his court.—It is remarked of this king, that he began his reign by assenting to this dreadful combat, and ended it by being killed himself (as was before related) in a mock fight during a time of public rejoicing.

We are now come to that period, in which the great and good Sully took so much pains both with individuals and with his prince Henry IV. totally to abolish a bloody practice, which was arisen to a truly formidable height. For during the first eighteen years of this king's reign, (reckoning from the death of Henry III.) not fewer than four thousand gentlemen are said to have perished by the duel in France. But it must be remembered, that these were times of great religious feuds, as well as of civil commotions, both which contributed to produce a multitude of personal disputes. The king himself was partial to the practice of the duel, though he might lament its evil effects: but at length overcome by the complaints of his people, by the warm representations and even remonstrances of his faithful minister, he consulted with his nobility, his civil and military officers on the subject; and an edict for the severe punishment of duelling was concerted and published at Blois [r] in the year 1602. This edict was renewed with additional severities in 1609. These however produced little effect on account of the king's readiness to grant pardons, especially to such as had served him in the wars; beside which he was known to countenance in private some particular [u] duels. The king was very justly censured on this account, as annihilating the force of his own decrees; but in truth these decrees were rather forced from him through the necessity of the times and the urgency [x] of his minister, than adapted to his own ideas and private inclinations.

While

[r] The purpose of this edict was as follows. "Both challenger and challenged with their seconds are made guilty of lèse-majesty, and are to be punished with death and confiscation of goods. All the great officers and magistrates of France, military and civil, are required to publish and execute this edict in their several jurisdictions, and are empowered to judge the differences, which occasion duels. If the complainer of any affront refuse to accept the satisfaction these officers appoint, or the offender refuse to comply with it, he is to be imprisoned.—See COCKBURN, p. 344. and the authorities he quotes.

[u] Some time after the passing of this edict, Henry IV. is said to have given permission to Crequi to fight Don Philip of Savoy with the addition of this encouraging compliment.—"If I were not a king, I would gladly offer myself to be your second."—See MASSI.

[x] "Among all these different edicts none made so much noise as that against duels. This edict, in which duelling is declared to be high-treason or lèse-majesty, was passed at Blois in the month of June, and is a very severe one. This is the edict, which first gave the constables and marshals of France a power of prohibiting violent methods, and appointing the reparation of the injuries received. This the parliament restricted in the registering, to those rencounters alone that concerned the point of

While pardons therefore were so easily obtained, it was not probable that the rage of duelling would much abate: and accordingly we find its prevalence not

of honour, and excepted all other crimes, as debts, assaults, &c.—His majesty went so far as to make death the punishment of those, who disobeyed; in which I confess he acted contrary to my advice. I have too plainly declared my thoughts of this pernicious and savage abuse (n. b. Sully handles the subject of duelling at length in different parts of his Memoirs) to fear the accusation of having endeavoured to tolerate it; but I foresaw, that an excess of severity in the means would be the principal obstacle of the execution. When it becomes necessary to declare the will of the sovereign to the subject, it is of the utmost importance to examine carefully, whether the thing to be forbidden be of such a nature, that the fear of death may prevent disobedience? for otherwise those extremities are in my opinion less efficacious than “degradation or disgrace,” or even than a pretty high fine or forfeiture. If the practice of duelling be seriously attended to, it will be found to be of this nature; for it is commonly persons of quality and even of the greatest distinction, who are guilty of it; for whom solicitations are so much the more ardent and successful, as the punishment with which they are threatened is great and infamous; it is not therefore to be doubted, that many pardons will be granted, the example and the hope of which are sufficient to encourage others to infringe the law. It often happens, that those punishments are most regarded, for which a pardon dare not, or cannot be implored.”—— See SULLY's Memoirs, year 1602.

“The king (I am grieved to say) took so little care to enforce the observance of the edicts published by some of his predecessors against that barbarous custom of duelling (to which France had made herself a slave) that every day and for the slightest occasion, some blood was shed. I thought it my duty to convince young men of the error they were in with regard to true valour. “It is (said I) in the fields of war and in actions, which have the service of our country in view, that courage is permitted to be shown; that which arms us against our friends or countrymen, in contempt of all laws, as well divine as human, is but a brutal fierceness, madness, and real pusillanimity.”—I perceived that the moral I endeavoured to inculcate appeared very strange to these young men, who were carried away by the heat of blood and ardour of youth. One of them, who it was apparent thought to give himself consequence with his companions, replied—“that princes having at all times permitted, nay authorised duels, they had passed into a custom, which holds the place of a law.”—I contented myself at present with making the youth sensible, that he supported his argument on false and erroneous principles, and with preventing a challenge then in hand from proceeding further; but as soon as I retired, I gave free course to my reflections upon the singularity of an abuse, unknown to the most polished and at the same time bravest people. These reflections, when thrown upon paper, composed a kind of memorial, which I thought it my duty to present to the king. (N. B. Then follows an history of duelling and of the difference between ancient and modern duelling,—well worthy of perusal, but too long to be inserted here.) I could not wait his majesty's return to Paris, to communicate to him this memorial; to inform him of the accidents to which this practice gave occasion, and to desire him to put a stop to an evil, which was every day spreading by his indulgence. I entreated him to attend to the counsel, which I had presumed to give him, to renew the edicts against duels, to aggravate the punishment considerably, and to execute it rigidly; and to forbid all men to prosecute

not only unabated, but even increased in the following reign of Lewis XIII. In this reign no less than three edicts were issued declaratory against duels, and protesting,

prosecute any word of injury or offence otherwise than by course of law. It is certain, as I represented to his majesty, that a reputation for personal courage, such as this prince had established, was able to give an edict concerning duels twice the authority that it could derive from mere royal pleasure:—but the pleasure of the Master of kings, a power far superior, did not allow to the reign of Henry the Great, the extirpation of this abuse. It may be said, without pretending to justify this prince, that his easiness with respect to duels proceeded from an habit contracted by his long wars, by which he saw bloodshed without emotion, and that he was likewise not much less indifferent about his own blood. He had always some notion, that the last moment was inevitably predetermined.”—SULLY’s Memoirs, year 1605.

“ Henry was himself in fact to blame ; since it was through his easiness of temper, that the rage of duelling had spread through the court, the city, and over the whole kingdom ; and to such excess was it carried, that it gave me, and even his majesty himself, infinite fatigue and trouble to compose differences, and to hinder each day the disputants from proceeding to the last extremity. (Note, Lomenié computed in 1607, how many French gentlemen had been killed in duels, since Henry IV. came to the crown ; and the number was found to be full four thousand.)”——See SULLY’s Memoirs, year 1608.

“ This edict was followed by another against duels, for which I had long earnestly solicited. An extraordinary council being assembled for this purpose in the first gallery at Fontainebleau, his majesty, who was resolved to examine into this matter thoroughly, desired to know the origin of the different forms and customs used in duelling. His counsellors gave him no cause to compliment them on their erudition. All remained silent, and myself as well as the others—but with such expression in my looks, as made the king easily perceive, that I only waited his command to speak. His majesty then turned towards me and said—“ Grand master, by your looks I guess you know more than you pretend to know. I entreat, nay I command you to tell us your thoughts.” I still refused through respect ; but being again pressed to declare my sentiments, I made a speech, which I shall not repeat here, since it contained nothing more than what I formerly said in these memoirs, when I treated that subject.—I took care to send this edict against duels immediately into my government, and to have it observed with great strictness. (Note. This edict, which obliges those, who have been offended in point of honour to have recourse to the marshals of France or their lieutenants for reparation, inflicts very severe penalties, infamy, loss of nobility, and even death.)”——SULLY’s Memoirs, year 1609.

The following extract is from Cockburne on Duelling. p. 343. “ As modern duels began and were first indulged in France, so in no place have there been so many or so severe edicts against them ; to which the government there have been forced by the continual mischiefs, which happened from them, and the great disposition of that people towards them, which then at least was so great, that Monsieur Montagne says, “ he believes, if three Frenchmen were put into the Lybian desert, they would not “ be a month there without fighting.” And Monsieur Hardouin de Perfix, Bishop of Rhodes, observes in his Life of Henry IV. “ that the madness of duels seized the spirits of the nobility and gentry

protesting, "that no pardon would be granted the combatants hereafter."—These repeated prohibitions serve to show, both how obstinately bent the French nation was on this practice, and how remiss and lax its government had hitherto been in the prosecution of its own decrees. But though Lewis XIII. (surnamed the just) when he came to govern for himself seemed resolutely bent on abolishing this bloody custom, yet it was of too favourite a nature, and too deep-rooted to baffle his [Y] spirited exertions.

During

"so much, that they lost more blood by their own hands in time of peace than had been shed by their enemies in battle."—This is confirmed by another, Monsieur de Chevalier in his *Les Ombres de Defunts*, who tells us, that in the Province of Limosin, there were killed six-score gentlemen in the space only of six or seven months; and that in ten years time, there had been granted above six thousand pardons, and one hundred and twenty of them in one expedition to Piedmont."

It was justly observed of Henry IV. of France, that his private countenance did more to promote duels than his public edicts could do to restrain them; and that they would never cease, till the king ceased to intermeddle in them. A similar behaviour to that of the great Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, would have given energy to his edicts.—"It was in one of the Prussian campaigns, that the national practice of duelling arose to a considerable height in the Swedish army, not only among persons of rank and fashion, but between common soldier and common soldier. Upon which Gustavus published a severe edict, and denounced death against every delinquent. Soon after, a quarrel arose between two officers of very high command, and as they knew the king's firmness in preserving his word inviolable, they agreed to request an audience and besought his permission to decide the affair like men of honour. His majesty took fire in a moment, but repressed his passion with such art, that they easily mistook him: of course with some reluctance, but with the appearance of pitying brave men, who thought their reputations injured, he told them, that he blamed them much for their mistaken notions concerning fame and glory; yet as this unreasonable determination appeared to be the result of deliberate reflection, to the best of their deluded capacity, he would allow them to decide the affair at the time and place specified: "And, gentlemen, said he, I will be an eye-witness myself of your extraordinary valour and prowess."—At the hour appointed Gustavus arrived, accompanied by a small body of infantry, whom he formed into a circle round the combatants. "Now, says he, fight, till one man dies:"—and calling the executioner of the army to him (or the provost-marshal as the language then ran) "Friend, added he, the instant one is killed, behead the other before my eyes."—Astonished with such inflexible firmness the two generals, after pausing a moment, fell down on their knees and asked the king's forgiveness; who made them embrace each other, and give their promise to continue faithful friends to their last moments—as they both did with sincerity and thankfulness."—HARTE's *Hist. of the Life of Gustavus Adolphus*.

[Y] The law was sometimes so rigorously executed in this reign, that they, who were mortally wounded in a duel, were instantly dragged away to a gibbet and hanged up, that they might die by the hand of public justice before they died of their wounds.—See COCKBURNE on Duels, p. 347.

" Francis

During the minority of Lewis XIV. and notwithstanding the prohibitory edicts of his predecessors, a very desperate duel was fought between the dukes de Beaufort and de Nemours, (who were brothers in law) with four friends on each side, who were not to be idle spectators of the combat, but each to attack his man. Nemours was left dead in the field and two of his friends. Beaufort was not hurt, and the rest escaped with slight wounds. It does not appear that Beaufort underwent any censure. But this desperate affray, and likewise another fought in 1663, four against four [z], produced new edicts, and at length the king published in the year 1679 that famous one, which effected more than all

“ Francis de Montmorency, Count de Boutteville, was the most renowned duellist of this time. All the then acknowledged brave fellows used to assemble at his house in order to practise the use of arms, and to keep each other in proper wind, training, and discipline. The tremendous Boutteville was bid to expect no pardon from the king, if he persisted in these practices. Upon which he said, “ I will go then to Paris and fight there even in the Place Royale.”—He intimated this to the Marquis de Beuvron, with whom he had an affair of honour. They met accordingly in the Place Royale, fought, and fled from Paris.—Beuvron escaped to England with his second Chocquet; but Boutteville, with his second Des Chapelles were taken, and being conducted to Paris were tried according to law and both beheaded, for so daring and outrageous an insult against the king’s authority. This execution struck terror into the abettors of this bloody and now “ lawless” custom.”—See MASSI.

“ The passion or rather rage of duelling was carried to its highest pitch in Lewis the XIIIth’s reign. When acquaintances met, the usual inquiry was not then as now—“ What is the news of the day?”—but, “ who fought yesterday?”—See MASSI.

“ There is scarce any Frenchman (says Lord Herbert of Cherbury, who was the English Ambassador at the court of Lewis XIII.) deemed worth looking on, who has not killed his man in a duel.”—See his Life written by himself.

“ Sir Edward (afterwards Lord) Herbert of Cherbury, when Ambassador in France, displeased the favourite Luines (whose pride was unbounded) by his manly and uncrouching deportment; and a duel would have terminated the dispute, had Luines been of the same spirit with Herbert.—By misrepresentations Sir Edward was recalled, and Luines procured Cadinet his brother, Duke of Chaun, with a train of officers,—“ each of whom had killed his man”—to go Ambassador Extraordinary to England to complain of Sir E. Herbert. The inquiry proved in favour of Sir Edward, who fell on his knees to King James in presence of the Duke of Buckingham, requesting that a trumpeter, if not an herald, might be sent to Luines to tell him, that he had made a false relation of the whole affair; and that Sir E. Herbert demanded satisfaction of him sword in hand. The king answered, “ that he would take it into consideration.” But Luines died very soon after, and Herbert was again sent Ambassador to France.”

The “ peaceful” James could have little relish for embassies of this sort on such subjects, and attended by such a train of blood-thirsty champions.

[z] Betweed De la Fretes, &c.—See VOLTAIRE’S Age of Lewis XIV.

his predecessors could obtain, and which contributed in so great a degree to the suppression of all regular and outrageous duels in France. Two points seem more especially to have contributed to give stability to this edict; viz. the solemn agreement entered into by so many of the principal nobility and gentry of the kingdom—"that they would never fight a duel upon any pretence whatever [A];" and the firmness of the king in refusing all solicitations in behalf of offenders against it. The correction of this gross abuse seems indeed to have been a very laboured point of this great king's government. "We acknowledge (says he, in the preamble to the edict of 1679) that one of the greatest gifts, which we have received from God for the government and conduct of our dominions is, "that steadfastness," which he has been pleased to give us, "to maintain the statutes against duels and private combats, and severely to punish those, who have offended against laws so just and necessary for the preservation of our nobility and gentry. We are firmly resolved carefully to cherish so singular a grace, which gives us ground to hope, that we may be able during our reign, utterly to abolish that crime, after it has been in vain attempted by the kings our predecessors:" and in the last article he says,— "All the penalties contained in this present edict for the punishment of the offenders against our will and pleasure, would be useless and ineffectual, if we should not maintain the laws we have established by the motive of a steady and inflexible justice. To this end we swear and promise upon the faith and word of a king, not to exempt any person for the future for any cause or consideration whatsoever from the rigour of this present edict; that no remission, pardon, or discharge shall be granted by us to those, who shall be found guilty of the said crimes of duels and [B] rencontres. We most expressly

[A] From Henry IV. to Lewis XIV. the spirit of duelling (which was great) was made more a spirit of civil and religious party, than of personal concern. Quarrels were hereditary in families and in regiments, whose officers were bound to fight each other, whenever their regiments met: and some quarrels were only to be settled by the death of one or other of the parties.

[B] By the term Rencontre (which is a substitute in France to this day for the regular duel) is meant, that if one gentleman affronts another, either one or both take the first opportunity out of the reach of witnesses, to appoint a street or road, in which they are to meet to a moment, and being either on foot or horseback, or in their carriage, there to occasion some kind of jostling or sudden scuffle, as they shall have agreed on beforehand, which is to be looked on in the sense of whatever spectators may be accidentally present, as an unforeseen and instantaneous event, and by no means to have been

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“ expressly forbid all princes and lords near our person to make any intercession
 “ in behalf of offenders, on pain of incurring our high displeasure and indigna-
 “ tion; and to the executing of all herein declared, we have expressly and so-
 “ lemnly sworn on the return of the day of our coronation; to the end so
 “ christian, so just, and so necessary a law may be rendered more authentic and
 “ inviolable.” Neither does this great wish of his heart seem to have failed him
 in his latest hours, since in his [c] last will, he particularly recommends to his
 successor the care of his edict [D] against duels.

The

the effect of any former provocation. This rencontre however, if it can possibly be proved to have been not accidental, is every way liable to the same punishment as the regular duel by the edict of Lewis XIV.—However it furnishes a loop-hole to evade that edict.

[c] See Memoirs for the History of Madame de Maintenon, Vol. V.

[D] See this famous edict at large, and also the declarations of the Marshals of France, as a court of honour, on every point,—in Cockburne.

“ The challengers and challenged (if they accept) are liable to heavy fines, imprisonments and confiscations, even if they proceed not to the combat; and also seconds the same. But if fighting follows, the combatants are both to be put to death without pardon; all their estates real and personal to be forfeited, and their bodies not to be allowed christian burial. If one fall in the combat, the process against his body and memory to be the same.”

Augustus, king of Poland, in 1712 published a severe edict against duelling, consisting of sixty-two articles; for which also see Cockburne.

The following is an extract from Brydone's Tour through Sicily and Malta, Vol. I. Let. xvi.

“ Perhaps Malta is the only country in the world, where duelling is permitted by law. As their whole establishment is originally founded on the wild and romantic principles of chivalry, they have ever found it too inconsistent with these principles to abolish duelling; but they have laid it under such restrictions, as greatly to lessen its danger. These are curious enough. The duellists are obliged to decide their quarrel in one particular street of the city, and if they presume to fight any where else, they are liable to the rigour of the law. But what is not less singular, and much more in their favour, they are obliged under the most severe penalties to put up their swords, when ordered so to do by a woman, a priest, or a knight. Under these limitations in the midst of a great city, one would imagine it almost impossible that a duel could ever end in blood. However this is not the case. A cross is always painted on the wall opposite to the spot, where a knight has been killed, in commemoration of his fall. We counted about twenty of these crosses. About three months ago, two knights had a dispute at a billiard-table. One of them after giving a great deal of abusive language, added a blow; but to the astonishment of all Malta, (in whose annals there is not a similar instance) after so great a provocation, he refused to fight his antagonist. The challenge was repeated, and he had time to reflect on the consequences, but still he refused to enter the lists. He was condemned to make “amende honorable” in the great church of St. John for forty-five days successively, then to be confined in a dungeon, without

The following is the substance of what is advanced by Mercier in his "Tableau de Paris" on the subject of French duelling in the present age.—

"That at present duels are rarely known ("he must mean comparatively speaking") in France:—that young officers do not any more hazard their bravery to figure in private quarrels:—that other ranks have taken from them the lesson of duelling, and have abandoned after their example that senseless and barbarous custom. That gentlemen do not any longer think it necessary to fight, because the guards of two swords happen to run against each other in a narrow passage; or because one treads inadvertently on another's foot;—when the looks meet, or are even continued without a marked indecency; or when they are not of the same opinion; or when they defend their different sentiments with an unaffected freedom. That men are no more like savage beasts, ready to tear one another in pieces for an insignificant word. That it is not above threescore years ago, since the rage for fighting was arrived at such a pitch, as that the most prudent and cautious man could scarce avoid a bloody quarrel, and that his honour was exposed, if he did not challenge into the field on the least doubtful action and for the most trivial motive. That from the time of the regency also, every day was marked by the death of many men, in obedience to a prejudice which determined, that they should kill one another without reflection. That bullies, who estimated their existence according to its real worth, sported their lives on every occasion. This miserable point of honour, the more tyrannical, because we know not how to interpret it, obliged the most cautious man on the least challenge, to present his breast to the sword of his adversary, just taught by the usher of a fencing-school. That this inconceivable phrensy is abated,

without light for five years, after which he is to remain prisoner in the castle for life. The unfortunate young man, who received the blow, is likewise in disgrace; as he has not had an opportunity of wiping it out in the blood of his adversary. This has been looked upon as a very singular affair, and is still one of the principal topics of conversation. The first part of the sentence has already been executed, and the poor wretch is now in his dungeon. Nor is it thought that any abatement will be made in what remains. If the legislature in other countries punished with equal rigour those that "do" fight, as it does in this those that "do not;" I believe we should soon have an end of duelling. But I should imagine the punishment for fighting ought never to be a capital one (but rather something ignominious) and the punishment for not fighting should always be capital, or at least some severe corporal punishment: for ignominy will have as little effect on the person, who is willing to submit to the appellation of a coward, as the fear of death on one, who makes it his glory to despise it."

" without

“ without the interference of the legislature. That we are not less respected
 “ in society, but we are more free in words; and this right from its being
 “ reciprocal gives no cause of offence. Athens was subtil and disputatious;
 “ they dispute much at Paris; but a lively discussion only sharpens the mind
 “ without souring it. That there must be in repartee a mark of insult well
 “ decided, to be obliged to revenge it. Men contradict one another very much
 “ and for a long time together; and with all the liberty, which reason or de-
 “ licate raillery allows, without being thought to have offended; which how-
 “ ever was scarce allowed in the world threescore years ago. That the military
 “ more susceptible than others, yet bear with contradiction; that they are not
 “ less courageous for so doing, or less ready to repel an affront; but they know,
 “ when they ought to employ their bravery to repress indiscreet levity, or to
 “ punish insolence. That gentlemen go every where without arms; and wear
 “ no more the sword from morning till evening; they enter into public gardens
 “ without that useless weapon, and only hang it by their sides as an appendage
 “ of full dress. We should not have been able to have disarmed a Parisian
 “ without much trouble; but he has disarmed himself, because no one has
 “ thought to compel him. That the marshals of France know much less of
 “ quarrels than formerly, because it is allowed, that when there is a fight, the
 “ court of judicature should not be troubled with it; and we augur very ill of
 “ those, who suffer themselves to be prevented by the guards of the high con-
 “ stable’s jurisdiction. That there are disagreeable circumstances, where per-
 “ sonal honour forces the most gentle, the most courteous of men, to try his
 “ skill with his adversary. Public opinion then judges and acquits one of the
 “ combatants; because every body and every state has its “manners;” and it
 “ is not thought good to stifle that reasonable feeling, which repels insult
 “ seasonably, and maintains the dignity of every individual in the post where
 “ he finds himself stationed. But these cases become very rare in the eyes of
 “ prudence, of reason, and true valour. That with respect to those obscure
 “ and furious bullies, who in garrisons anticipate disputes, who provoke them
 “ by mere bravado, who make their boast in wrangling, who think to conceal
 “ their bad conduct by exposing their own lives, in attacking that of ano-
 “ ther, “ I do not see, says Dr. Swift, that there is any political evil in per-
 “ mitting them to kill one another reciprocally, and to rid ourselves of their
 “ persons by a method, which they themselves have imagined, and which all

“ the wisdom of the laws would otherwise have never been able to have devised.”
“ That the edicts of Lewis XIV. against duelling have not been able to prevent
“ a multitude of men from being killed in the field, without hatred or vengeance being concerned in their bloody quarrels. But that the discourses of
“ some philosophers, pleading the cause of reason and humanity, have obtained
“ from these furious men, that which they would have refused to the monarch
“ and his solemn laws.”

Let us now see what has been done in our own country relative to this bloody custom.—Though duelling never rose to such an height in England as it did in France (on account of the different forms of government, the former being so much less monarchical and military than the latter), yet it sprang from the same fountain in both kingdoms and owed its progress to the same causes; though those causes acted with superior energy in one kingdom than in the other. The judicial combat, as an ordeal trial, prevailed much in England, and made a part of the customary law of the land.—The famous meeting between the dukes of Norfolk and Hereford in the presence of Richard II. is well known to every reader of Shakespeare, as well as of English history. But the following preparation for combat, which happened in the preceding reign, in the nineteenth year of Edward III. is not perhaps so much known, though more singular and curious, both on account of the profession of one of the combatants and the nature of their dispute. For it was not between men of the sword, or on account of menacing or reproachful language; but between William de Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, and Robert, Bishop of Salisbury, for the right of the castle of Sarum. The bishop laid claim to it, and the earl declared himself ready to defend his possession by the duel; to which the bishop consented. On the day appointed the bishop brought to the lists his champion, clothed in a white garment reaching down to the middle leg; above which he wore a short cloke or cassock adorned with the episcopal arms: and an esquire and a page were attendants on this champion, bearing a staff and shield. The earl also led his champion by the hand into the lists accoutred in much the same manner, with two attendant esquires carrying two white staves. But during the ceremonials of examining the arms on each side, an order arrived from the king for deferring the decision of the suit, lest the king's interests should be concerned in it; and during the intervening time the matter in dispute

was

was adjusted between [E] the parties.—So late as the year 1571 in the reign of Elizabeth, a demand was made for a decision by judicial combat, concerning the right of some manorial lands in the small isle of Hartie, near the isle of Shepey, Kent. A proceeding was instituted in the court of common pleas against the holder of the lands. The defendant demanded leave to maintain his possession by the duel, the petitioners accepted the challenge, and the whole bench of lawyers were put into confusion how to act on this appeal:—which proves that the judicial combat was still held to be a legal and regular mode of proceeding, where both parties were agreed, though it had fallen much into disuse. The law-court does not seem to have had a power of refusal; accordingly champions were immediately appointed by each party (for there being two petitioners against one defendant, the parties themselves could not fight) to decide the combat; and all ceremonials of time, place, and arms were adjusted. But the queen anxious to avoid spilling of blood issued her commands, that the suit should be compounded;—that the defendant should remain in possession by paying a stipulated sum to the petitioners: but yet to save the credit of the defendant, who had demanded the combat, as well as the authority of the law, which enjoined its being fulfilled, the solemnity of the duel should proceed. Accordingly on the day appointed the justices of the common pleas, the counsellors, and lawyers in all their full formalities, went down to Tothill-fields to be umpires of the contest; and also the champions on both sides appeared equipped for the fight. Every ceremonial was gone through, and in the last place the petitioners were called on to maintain their suit in the person of their champion. But (as it had been previously agreed) no petitioners appeared to acknowledge their champion; on which they were nonsuited and victory adjudged to the defendant: and thus ended this mock judicial combat [F], which was the last of the kind that ever was demanded in England.

But

[E] See Camden's *Britannia*, Wiltshire, p. 181. folio.

By this example (as well as the other which follows) it appears, that duels ordeal, which at first were chiefly used in personal matters, or when no other proof could be obtained, had now changed or at least extended their nature, and were admitted at the desire of the parties in cases of property, which might have been cognisable at common law.

[F] Revocare tamēn hoc contigit an. 15 Reg. Elizabethæ termino Trinitatis, et in hunc modum (non sine magnā jurisconsultorum perturbatione) institui. Simo Low et Jo. Kime prosecuti sunt “Breve de recto” (quod ad prædiorum decernendam proprietatem summa apud nos est juris actio)

But in proportion as the public combat was restrained and discountenanced, the private duel became more frequent (every one now esteeming himself the only judge of his own case in personal matters); insomuch that in Elisabeth's reign and that of James I. it was arisen to a great height. This appears from the writings of Sir Francis Bacon, who made an harangue against duelling in the star-chamber-court, on an information instituted by himself, as attorney-general, against two persons, one of whom sent and the other carried a challenge. (See his Works, Vol. IV. folio.) He begins with observing, " that
 " the duel from its great frequency is now become an unbridled evil, though
 " the fault ought not to be attributed to a remissness of government, but to
 " the rooted prejudices of the times: that he continued the present prosecution,
 " though it was against gentlemen of inferior rank, because he found it begun
 " by his predecessor in office; but that he should have been glad to have
 " brought one first against persons of greater consequence. He hopes how-
 " ever, that the "Great" will begin to think it time to leave off the practice,
 " when they find it adopted by barber-surgeons and bachelors. He then enters
 " into the nature and extent of its mischief, and shows at large—that private
 " revenge is one of the greatest evils in society; that the private duel is a de-
 " fiance of all law, and a setting up in its stead the supremacy of some trifling
 " French and Italian pamphlets, which have thought fit to establish certain
 " absurd maxims, which they are pleased to call "points of honour." That

versus Tho. Paramorum pro manerio et terris quibusdam in insulâ Hartie juxta insulam Shepey in comitatu Cantii. Paramorus obtulit jus suum duello defendere: quod actores, quos nos "Petentes" dicimus, acceperunt. Paramorus inde pugilem suum (seu Championem ut vocant) quendam Georgium Horne, virum strenuum et quadratum, coram Justiciariis Civilium Placitorum Westmonasterii adducit: Petentes Henricum Nailer lanistam quempiam non procerum æque, sed valde agilem. Horne in symbolum provocationis ad duellum ferream manicam humi projecit, quem Nailer impiger attollens pactum firmat: satisfdatumque et juratum est ab utroque, quod die Lunæ proximæ post crastinum Trinitatis in campo Totillensi duellum aggrederentur. Interea verò ad mandatum regis majestatis cædem exhorrentis lis composita est. Ita nempe quod Paramorus terram litigatam integram haberet, et Petentes pretii quiddam reportarent. Ne tamen res in Paramori damnum cederet, visum est, ut utrinque procederetur ad duelli solemnitatem, et ut Vades, qui se ad producendum pugiles obligassent, utrumque more debito exhiberent. Petentes verò demùm exacti haud comparerent, sed ex non prosequendo causam amitterent.—Then follows a very full and circumstantial account of the ceremonials attending this meeting in Tothill-fields on the day appointed; and how the courts from Westminster-hall, and all the lawyers in their full formalities, came to the spot to attend the combat as judges: but the petitioners (as was agreed) did not appear.—See SPELMAN'S Glossary ad vocem "Campus."

“ the best blood in the kingdom is spilt in this useless manner,—particularly
 “ that of young men, those *Auroræ filii* (as he calls them) or sons of the
 “ morning. That the king has very properly styled them in his proclamation
 “ “ bewitching,” because so many are carried down the stream of opinion
 “ against their own better judgment. That the only remedies are a constant
 “ and settled resolution in the state to abolish the practice: that if done “ at
 “ once,” no man could be hurt in his honour: that it must be no more cockered
 “ and its humour fed by a multiplicity of conceits against compounding quar-
 “ rels. That as the king is the seat and fountain of honour, banishment from
 “ his presence must be the most dishonourable and disgraceful of all situations,
 “ and consequently one of the fittest [G] punishments for duelling. That all
 “ the preparatory and “intermediate acts, which concern it, should equally be
 “ punished. That the late severities in France had good effect. That it was
 “ objected to the law of England, that it made no distinction between “ infi-
 “ dious” murders and killing upon “ fair terms;”—and where indeed was
 “ there any distinction?—not in “ divine” law. That we ought to learn [H]
 “ of the Turks: they fight no duels. “ How dare you (say they to their own
 “ people) fight with each other? Are there not Christians enough to kill?”—
 Then follow the laws, which the attorney-general says he shall pursue by favour
 of

[G] This seems a very proper mode of punishing the duel among the “ Great;” and pity it had not been followed up with spirit. But the event of one of the most revengeful and inhuman of duels between Lord Bruce and Sir Edward Sackville, which was fought in the year 1613, and ended in the death of the former, shows, that the “ Great” in this reign were suffered to fight with impunity. For Sir Edward Sackville the survivor was not only permitted to return to all his honours and possessions in England, after having purposely left the kingdom to fight, but was in great favour at court, and was promoted to high offices and honours:—the earldom of Dorset fell to him by inheritance. Lord Herbert of Cherbury was also a man of romantic valour—a great duellist—and in great favour at court.

[H] The following passages however will show us, that not much good is to be learned from the Turks, in what they substitute for the duel.

“ In Turkey intoxication always precedes revenge. Assassination is the only method employed; but danger is never faced in cold blood.”—Baron de Tott’s Preliminary Discourse to the History of the Turks, Vol. I. in a note.—Robinson’s Translation.

“ The fury of the Turks (says the Baron, Vol. I. p. 215.) rarely breaks out in hasty violence: they never fight duels, but they assassinate; and it is thus that all their quarrels terminate, unless they come to an accommodation. The offended party publicly sharpens his knife or prepares his fire-arms. Some friends endeavour to appease him, others to excite and encourage him to the murder; but no measures

of the king and that court, before whom he means always to bring the offenders. “ I will prosecute (says Bacon)—if any man appoint the field, though
 “ no fight takes place;—if any man send a challenge in writing or message;—
 “ if any man accept a challenge, or accept being a second;—if any man depart
 “ the realm in order to fight;—if any man revive a quarrel against the late
 “ proclamation; and I beg to have a writ, ne exeat regnum.”—The star-chamber-court remarked on this occasion, “ that there was the most material
 “ difference between a judicial combat and a private duel: that they should ever
 “ set their faces against the latter:” They fined the present delinquents “ five
 “ hundred pounds” each, and enjoined them openly to acknowledge the heinousness of their offence at the “ public assizes.”

The following letter concerning duelling was also written by Sir Francis Bacon to Lord Viscount Villiers in the year 1616; which is the 98th in Vol. IV. of his Works.

“ My very good Lord,

“ Yesterday was a day of great good for his majesty’s service and the peace
 “ of this kingdom concerning duels, by occasion of D’Arcey’s case. I spake big,
 “ and publishing his majesty’s strait charge to me said, it had struck me blind,
 “ as in point of duels, cartels, &c. I should not know a coronet from an hat-
 “ band. I was bold also to declare, how excellently his majesty had expressed
 “ to me a contemplation of his concerning duels; that is, “ that when he
 “ came forth and saw himself princely attended with goodly noblesse and gen-
 “ tlemen, he entered into the thought, that none of their lives were in cer-

are taken to prevent the crime threatened by these preparations. Its commission however must be preceded by intoxication. Wine inspires the Turk with the degree of courage necessary for the gratification of his revenge. Having wrought himself up to the proper pitch, he sallies forth from the tavern, and from that time the offender has no hope of safety, but from the unskilfulness of his antagonist. If the murder be effected, and the guards, who never have any arms but staves, pursue the assassin, he will then give real proofs of courage, and defend himself like a lion. Guilt seems to have ennobled him, and if he be overpowered, the threats of his comrades terrify the relations of the deceased into an accommodation, which leaves the criminal in the full enjoyment of the high esteem he has acquired by this heroic action. This is no exaggeration. Such an one has killed such another, is never said but by way of panegyric. He, who has killed ten, is the hero of his quarter; there is no merry-making without him, and his friendship is esteemed a safeguard.”

“ tainty,

“ tainty, not for twenty-four hours, from the duel ; for it was but an heat or
 “ a mistaking, and then a lie, and then a challenge, and then life ;—saying,
 “ that he did not marvel seeing Xerxes shed tears to think, not one of his great
 “ army should be alive within an hundred years.” His majesty was touched
 “ with compassion to think, that not one of his attendants but might be dead
 “ within twenty-four hours by the duel. This I write, because his majesty
 “ may be wary what he saith to me (in things of this sort) I being so apt to
 “ play the blab. In this also I forgot not to prepare the judges and wish them
 “ to profess, and as it were to denounce, that in all cases of duel capital before
 “ them, they will use equal severity towards the “ insolent” murder by the
 “ duel, and the “ insidious” murder ; and that they will extirpate that differ-
 “ ence out of the opinions of men ;—which they did excellently well.”

Thus did our great Bacon tread in the steps of the great Sully, in endeavour-
 ing to stir up their respective sovereigns to extirpate duelling. James had an
 utter aversion to the practice, whilst the contrary appears to have been the case
 with Henry : but the menaces of James, being not followed up by an equal
 spirit and firmness of conduct, ended for the most part in the emptiness of
 words. The state of duelling therefore continued much the same during James’s
 reign ; whilst his son and successor experienced too much disquietude in the
 fundamentals of his government, to be able to plan any new regulations of
 internal [1] police. The civil wars however which followed, and which termi-
 nated in bringing Charles I. to the fatal block, were not of a nature calculated
 (like those of France) to increase the rage of the duel, but rather to suspend the
 frequency

[1] There was a preparation however for a purgation by single combat in a doubtful case in the
 reign of Charles I. an. 1631.—“ By letters from the lord keeper, all the judges of the king’s-bench
 were required to come up to London, and the business was for their advice, touching the conference
 had in Germany between certain Scots, about making of the marquis Hambleton head of a party
 against the king, and his kingdoms of England and Scotland, and what was fit for the king to do
 thereupon.

“ The lord Rea, a Scotch baron, did impeach Ramsay and Meldram, for moving him to this con-
 spiracy. They denied it punctually, and no witness could be produced. Ramsay a soldier offered to
 clear himself by combat, that he was innocent, and the appellant Rea accepted the challenge. The
 king was desirous it should be put upon a duel ; and the judges were consulted.—According to the
 advice of the judges, there was a court of the constable and marshal appointed, and the earl of Lindsey
 made constable for that purpose ; and the proceedings between Rea and Ramsay in that court were very
 solemn,

frequency of its practice. As it was not a struggle (latterly in particular) between two powerful factions of nobility and gentry one against the other, but of the commonalty against whatever was called royal, noble, or honourable in rank and fortune; the consequence was, that the gentry and those, who had been accustomed to look towards their own swords for revenge in personal affronts, would have disdained to have settled points of honour by private duel with antagonists of such ignoble birth. The general course of their thoughts being also bent on a repulsion of the common enemy of the order of gentry, they became more closely united within themselves, and were in less habits of paying a scrupulous attention to all the supercilious dictates of a captious honour. We find however that during [K] the protectorate, Cromwell's parliament in the year 1654 passed an ordinance for preventing and punishing duels. At the restoration of Charles II. the cavaliers seem to have brought back with them the French partiality for the duel, and to have exercised those arms, which they now wore again in common, in all the licentiousness of the private combat. To check the progress of which Charles II. published a proclamation [L] to enforce

solemn, and multitudes of people attending that novelty.—The business however was afterwards taken up (made up) by the king, through the interest of the marquis Hambleton, whose servant Ramfay was; and the lord Rea returned to his command under the king of Sweden in Germany.”——WHITLOCKE's Memorials of the English Affairs, folio, 1682, p. 10.

[K] By an ordinance of Cromwell's published in 1654, “for preventing challenges, duels, and all provocations thereto,” it was enacted, “That if any person should challenge or cause to be challenged,—or accept, or knowingly carry a challenge to fight a duel, he should be committed to prison without bail for six months, and give security for his good behaviour for one whole year after. Persons challenged not discovering it in twenty-four hours to be deemed accepters. Fighting a duel, where death should ensue, to be adjudged murder. Fighting a duel upon a preceding challenge, being a second or assisting therein, though death should not ensue thereupon, to be banished for life within one month after conviction, and in case of return to suffer death. Persons using provoking words or gestures to be indicted, and if convicted to be fined, bound to good behaviour, and to make reparation to the party injured, according to his quality and the nature of the offence.”——See Parliamentary History, Vol. XX. p. 311.

[L] Charles R. “Whereas it is become too frequent, especially with persons of quality, under a vain pretence of honour, to take upon them to be the revengers of their private quarrels by duel and single combat, which ought not to be, upon any pretence or provocation whatsoever; We considering that the sin of murder is detestable before God, and this way of prosecuting satisfaction, scandalous to the christian religion, and a manifest violation of our laws and authority—out of our pious care to prevent

enforce the laws against duelling, which might have had some effect, had he kept up to the dignity of his royal word in not pardoning offenders; but of this he was totally negligent. The practice of duelling therefore still maintained its usual ground, because neither in Charles's nor any of his successors' reigns has there been an "enforcement" of the laws against this bloody practice.—In the year following the desperate duel between duke Hamilton [M] and lord Mohun, in which both fought with a brutal ferocity and a determination of murder, and in which both accomplished their barbarous intentions and fell dead together—a bill was brought into the house of commons for the more effectual restraint of the duel; but after twice [N] reading it was lost.

But

prevent unchristian and rash effusion of blood, do by this our royal proclamation strictly charge and command all our loving subjects of what quality soever, that they do not, either by themselves or by others, by message, word, writing, or other ways or means, challenge, or cause to be challenged, any person or persons to fight in combat, or single duel, nor carry, accept, or conceal any such challenge or appointment, nor actually fight any such duel with any of our subjects or others, or as a second or otherwise, accompany or become assistant therein. And we do hereby,—to the intent that all persons may take care to prevent the dangers they may incur by acting or assisting in any such duel,—declare our royal pleasure, that we will not grant our pardon to any person or persons that shall fight, or be any way aiding or concerned in any such duel, where any person shall be slain, or die of his wounds received therein, but will leave all such persons to the utmost rigour and severity of the laws: And further, that we will not suffer or endure any person or persons to be or remain in our court, who shall presume to intercede in the behalf of any person or persons that shall offend contrary to this our proclamation. And for the better avoiding all such duels, we do hereby straitly charge and command all person or persons whatsoever, who shall receive or know of any challenge sent or delivered as aforesaid, that they do forthwith give notice thereof to some of our privy council, or otherwise to some justice of peace near the place, where such offence shall be committed, upon pain of our highest displeasure, and being left to be proceeded against according to the strictest rigour and severity of the laws.

"Given at our Court at Whitehall, the ninth day of March 1679. In the two and thirtieth year of our reign."—London Gazette March 8—11, 1679.

[M] This duel was fought in Hyde-park, November 1712, on occasion of some law-suits, which had bred an animosity and virulence between the parties.

[N] April 9, 1713. The parliament met; and the queen delivered a speech, in which was the following sentence.—"The impious practice of duelling requires some speedy and effectual remedy."—In the commons' address on this speech, no notice is taken of duelling, but in general terms it is replied—"The best returns they can make for her majesty's goodness will be a ready and dutiful compliance with every thing she has been pleased to recommend."—But a bill was afterwards brought in to "abolish trials by single combat, and to prevent the impious practice of duelling."

And

But there wants not any new laws on the subject, but only a due enforcement of those already subsisting; since not only—"the law [o] adjudges it to be murder, if one man kill another in a duel; but even fighting at all, when no mischief ensues, is punishable by fine and imprisonment, and both sender and bearer of a challenge are deemed equally guilty [p]."—Yet how little are these wholesome statutes regarded! Challenges are forwarded and accepted, and the names of all the parties proclaimed at length in the public prints without disguise, or shame, or censure. The combat itself is pursued and its proceedings made public in defiance of all decency and law. If one party fall, the survivor either absconds for a time without much inquiry made after him or puts himself on his trial; where the whole business seems to turn (as if these were days of chivalry) on the "mode" of that fighting, which produced death, whether it were "fair and honourable," rather than on the "absolute illegality of the fight itself;" which circumstance alone (viz. its being an illegal action)

And on June 13, 1713, the commons read a second time "the bill to abolish trials by single combat and to prevent the impious practice of duelling;"—and committed the same to a committee of the whole house;—but that bill was afterwards dropt."—See CHANDLER's History and Proceedings of the House of Commons of England from the year 1660. 8vo. 1742. Vol. IV. p. 336, &c. and Vol. V. p. 38.

[o] See BLACKSTONE's Commentaries.

[p] "It is agreed, that wherever two persons in cool blood meet and fight on a precedent quarrel, and one of them is killed, the other is guilty of murder, and cannot help himself by alleging, that he was first struck by the deceased; or that he had often declined to meet him, and was prevailed on to do it by his importunity; that it was his only intent to vindicate his reputation; or that he meant not to kill, but only to disarm his adversary. For since he deliberately engaged in an act highly unlawful in defiance of the laws, he must at his peril abide the consequences thereof. And from hence it clearly follows, that if two persons quarrel over night and appoint to fight the next day; or quarrel in the morning and agree to fight in the afternoon; or such a considerable time after, by which in common intendment it must be presumed that the blood was cooled, and then they meet and fight, and one kill the other, he is guilty of murder."—HAWKINS's Pleas of the Crown, B. I. C. xxxi.

"An affray may receive an aggravation from the dangerous tendency thereof; as where persons coolly and deliberately engage in a duel, which cannot but be attended with the apparent danger of murder, and is not only an open defiance of the law, but carries with it a direct contempt of the justice of the nation, as putting men under a necessity of righting themselves: upon which considerations persons convicted of barely sending a challenge have been adjudged to pay a fine of one hundred pounds and to be imprisoned for one month without bail; and also to make a public acknowledgment of their offence and to be bound to their good behaviour."—HAWKINS's Pleas of the Crown, B. I. C. lxiii.

would

would in other cases be sufficient [Q] to condemn the culprit. But this point is generally pretty well secured before the defaulter appears to stand his trial; and then either a total acquittal ensues, or the statute of manslaughter is egregiously perverted to protect the duellist—a statute which was certainly never designed to countenance murder, but to express a peculiar abhorrence of it, by assigning a degree of punishment even to its accidental commission [R]. The law is clear in determining, that whoever falls in a deliberate duel is murdered. The fact of the death being notorious and legally proved, what evasion can intervene sufficient to justify another verdict? The king has lost a subject, the community one of its members, and that not only without, but expressly contrary to, all legal authority. It is said indeed by some,—“that the case of murder seems somewhat altered; in that the deceased assented in a certain degree to his own death (or at least to put his life in the utmost hazard) by a voluntary meeting in the combat; and that therefore his slayer ought not to be considered in the light of a common murderer.” But what does this prove?—Nothing in favour of the survivor, who knew, when he went out into the field of danger, that his antagonist had no right to put his life in another man’s power, but that in so doing he was acting against express and positive law; who knew, that if he should happen to kill his adversary, he was in the eye of that law to be deemed—a murderer. But with regard to the person slain the objection has validity. It proves, that he fell not with innocence on his part or against his own seeking; but in a great measure as by the crime of voluntary self-murder, to which the actual slayer acted only as an accessory: it would therefore be well, if all persons so falling were so considered, and the laws relative to self-murder enforced against them.—But though laws may be devised, which if duly exerted would tend much to restrain this practice, yet it is to be feared, that none will effectually and totally suppress it. This is only to be expected from a change of opinions and manners, and from placing the point of honour on some more solid and firm basis, than it stands at present on the decision of the duel; which

[Q] “I have not found any case of an actual execution in England in consequence of a duel fairly fought.”—Principles of Penal Law, printed 1771. Chap. Duelling.

[R] See “Remarks on the Opinions of some of the most celebrated Writers on the Crown Law, respecting the due Distinction between Manslaughter and Murder”—applied in particular to the subject of duels, and setting forth the absurdity of the verdict manslaughter in such cases—by GRANVILLE SHARP, 1773.

is every way unavailing to truth, to equity, and justice, as well as contrary to the laws of God and man.

C H A P. III.

THE NATURE AND GROUNDS OF THE MODERN DUEL OPENED. CAUSES OF ITS REPREHENSION.

C O N T E N T S.

The duel becomes private on laws being enacted against it; which forms its modern state.—Ancient and modern duel compared—to the great discredit of the latter.—The nature and grounds of the modern duel opened.—Why some particular words or actions are deemed particularly disgraceful.—Unimportant and vicious causes of the duel.—Passions that excite to it.—Difference between the rustic and polite duel—to the discredit of the latter.—Duels being fought in cold blood a great aggravation of their guilt.—Particular causes, why the duel is so reprehensible.—Difference of opinion between a poor and a rich man's breaking the laws.—Private revenge (or satisfaction, as it is called) tends to subvert public justice.—Insufficiency of the duel to clear up the truth.—It is an effect totally unconnected with its cause, either as it punishes too little or too much, or not at all, or not the guilty person.—It hazards and often produces the crying sin of murder.—It sacrifices the substantial happiness and interests of dearest connexions, and sets aside the determinations of every social, moral, and religious duty—in obedience to the phantom of modern honour.

BUT however ineffectual laws may have proved to abolish the practice of duelling, yet they have contributed totally to change its nature and property; and the private mode of engagement necessary to be pursued in consequence of these laws forms a distinguishing era in the history of duelling, which may be called its modern state. Let us first then take a short view of the ancient

cient and modern duel in a comparative light, before we proceed to discuss the supposed merits of the latter.

The ancient duel was the offspring of barbarous ignorance fostered by gross superstition : the modern flourishes and is esteemed honourable in the days of illumination, when the sun of science and improvement both in policy and religion rides in meridian glory. Every thing almost that was reprehensible in the feudal system of government and manners has been exploded, or has died away of itself, except this inhuman practice, which even the force of laws cannot supersede. The ancient duellist combated for innocence or public fame, in the presence of the most splendid and royal spectators ;—the modern one is compelled to fight in obscurity, to seek privacy and retirement, that he may hide his lawless head. One had the approbation of his sovereign before he fought, added to the sanction of the laws, which had minutely set forth the canons of duelling :—the other acts in defiance of all law and authority, which expressly ascertains his guilt in so doing. The former decided his quarrels by the sword or lance, and by being clad in complete armour was likely to suffer less mischief :—the latter rushes upon death by means of the pistol, which though on some accounts it must be deemed a fairer instrument of destruction, as it places all combatants nearer on a level, is yet a more bloody and murderous weapon. A scratch of the sword was deemed in many cases a sufficient satisfaction ; whilst the pistol distinguishes not the nature of the affront, but may be equally deadly in its discharge on the most important or most trivial occasion. The knight of chivalry engaged for the protection of innocence and the redress of grievances—not his own :—the modern champion fights for himself alone, and to revenge his own personal affronts. The ancient duellist also entered the lists for his “ honour ;” but it was frequently for the honour of conquest alone, and he received his reward from the voice of public fame :—the modern one still engages for honour, but it is merely to preserve that degree of it he at present possesses, not to acquire fresh laurels ; since the sort of honour, which he procures from giving or accepting a challenge, is purely negative ; being only to avoid the imputation of a cowardice of which perhaps he was never suspected. All these circumstances tell not much in favour of the comparative innocence of our present combatants.

But the custom itself of the modern duel is so ill founded, as not to be able to stand any process of reasoning arising from the principles of social union, morality, or religion: it solely rests on the notions of fashionable honour, which will not stand the test of argument. This mistaken point of honour shall be waved for the present, till the occasions and merits of the duel in itself have been considered; from what causes it springs, what common duties of life it counteracts, how it affects society and civil government, and how the combatants themselves.

Though the differences and disputes, which give birth to the duel are various, yet they all strictly speaking proceed from one and the same cause, viz. the wound that is supposed to be given to the honour of a gentleman. Hence it is deducible, why some actions or speeches are held to be more particularly disgraceful than others. For as gentlemen in the state of the ancient duel fought on horseback with swords and lances and completely armed, so those of lower rank engaged on foot with sticks and quarter staves. To receive a stroke therefore with a cane or stick was ever deemed by the gentleman a peculiar disgrace, because it was supposed to show a plebeian contempt of the person thus assaulted. The same dishonour also was affixed to a blow on the face, because the vulgar only fought with their faces uncovered and therefore liable to be disfigured. To give a gentleman the lie we must suppose was a capital offence against the feelings of honour long before Francis I. affixed a fresh stigma to it; since deceit and falshood are so unbecoming a man of rank and condition in every point of view. The opprobrious terms of coward, scoundrel, or rascal must fall under the same predicament. It is easy likewise to conceive, that a challenge once given or accepted cannot consistently with the laws of modern honour be easily retracted.

But there are many other ways beside gross and palpable affronts, by which the feelings of a man of scrupulous honour may be disturbed; and the degrees of those sensations depend so much on the natural temper and constitution of the person offended, as to render them almost infinite. However were the notions of wounded honour confined to important causes alone (though none indeed are really important enough to justify the hazard of murder) the number of duels would be considerably diminished: A valuable and worthy individual
might

might now and then fall before his time, whose family and private connexions might severely feel his loss, and the public be deprived of the fruits of that bravery, which might have been exerted on more laudable occasions. But the fact is, that by far the greater number of duels in these days arise from very unimportant, if not vicious causes. The greater calls upon the sensibility and nice feelings, which might be thought most excusable in stimulating to private revenge—such as “domestic dishonour” and the like—are now suffered to be settled by the slow forms of judicial process; while lighter matters alone are productive of the duel.—The acrimony of elections, the fury of party-zeal, the fumes of wine, the defence of light women, and the disputes of the gaming-table give it too frequent and general a birth. High spirited and ungovernable youths of fashion, while their judgment is yet uninformed and their passions at the height, scarce esteem themselves complete gentlemen, before they have had an “affair of honour” on their hands; which they imagine as necessary to the establishment of their modish character, as the reputation of gambling or adulterous connexions.

But the dispositions and passions of men are so very different, that some are much more liable to be hurried into this practice than others. Such for instance as are subject to the attacks of violent love, will probably suffer also at some period or other, the anguish of rankling jealousy; and jealousy, we know, will not easily be satisfied without hazarding the effusion of its own or its rival's blood. Again; a warmth and irascibility of temper is a leading feature in rousing the spirit of irritable honour, and in provoking to the challenge; which when once set on foot is cherished by anger, resentment, and implacability. Whereas the cool and considerate man is neither easily led to provoke others, or to be provoked himself; he loves not to aggravate but to lessen affronts, and never draws his sword but in mere self-defence. This last circumstance is not to be imputed to the impressions of cowardice, since the truest courage is as studious to avoid unnecessary danger, as it is to behave with becoming spirit on all proper occasions. It is needless to enter here into a discussion of the effects of the violent passions, or to show how little those persons promote the welfare of society or the happiness of individuals, who do not strive to restrain their furious sallies. But with respect to warmth and hastiness of temper it must be observed, that though the cause of the duel should originate in a sudden gust of

of

of passion (as it often does) yet the angry fit is suffered to cool and subside (or at least sufficient time is allowed for such a salutary purpose) by the hours that usually intervene between the provocation, the challenge, and the combat itself.

When persons of inferior rank begin to feel the fumes of their potations, they grow warm and positive in their opinions; disputes and quarrels arise, courage is inspired by the potent draught, the approaching battle is proclaimed, the stage cleared, and the point of honour determined on the spot. What is this but a rustic duel? or wherein does it differ from the more polite one, but in its open and undisguised process, in the weapons used, and in its speedy decision? Is it not even more excusable, as the parties engage under the immediate influence of strong passions? Do they not act more naturally than their superiors, when they proceed without delay to the termination of the dispute, which, if it be not thus quickly settled before reason can resume her seat [s], is seldom heard of afterwards. But by a refinement (as it will be called) in the behaviour of the gentleman (though in fact it is calculated more to conceal his defiance of the laws and to avert against prevention) he determines not his controversy on the spot, but at a distance of time sufficient for the passions to cool and for reason to govern. When the losses of the gaming-table have roused corroding passions, when vicious companions of either sex have corrupted the heart, or the fumes of wine have intoxicated the brain, what wonder if the members of such meetings rise from warmth to warmth, till they are betrayed into some unwary expression or action of dishonour, which according to modern ideas must be wiped off by the duel! The challenge is accordingly to be given and accepted though not on the spot; and though both parties should be sen-

[s] Professed "boxing matches" in cool blood, which are now so inhumanly and illegally encouraged by the fashionable amateurs of that bloody science, are of a different nature. They are rather a species of tilts and tournaments among the vulgar, fought for fame and the honour of victory alone. These brawny knights of the fist have nothing to do in their combats with "satisfaction," or the personal revenge of gentlemen, but "lay in their blows" with the most disinterested prowess. And however the great and fashionable may boast a spirit of honour in the conduct of "their" duel, the vulgar are by no means behind them on these occasions; since nothing is deemed by them more despicable or is productive of more disgrace than any "unfair play."—Nay, in one respect the vulgar seem to act with more honour than their betters; since on these bloody-minded occasions of single combat, the former act openly, professedly, and in the presence of thousands, while they defy the laws; whereas the latter sneak into privacy and retirement to effect their purpose—and that they may be the better able in case of fatal consequences to fly from the stroke of public justice.

fible, when reflection returns, of the folly of the business, yet matters perhaps are now thought to be gone too far to be recalled without a supposed stain on the honour: and thus all duels must be said to be fought in cold blood, since (a very few excepted) they are never determined on the spot or for hours after the dispute; but this circumstance tends much to aggravate their guilt, as proceeding not from a "casual" breach, but a "determined" defiance of divine and human laws.

But let us examine into some particular causes, which render the duel so reprehensible. It is highly culpable, because, by a self-created power of private judgment in supposed criminal cases, it tends to subvert legal authority by not submitting to the principles of public justice, or to the express laws of the land against such a practice. If a poor man forsake the paths of strict honesty, or be driven to demand your money on the road, to supply perhaps the urgent wants and necessities of a famishing family, he is called to severe account for such a breach of the laws. If this wretched creature in self-defence discharge a pistol at you, which may fortunately do no harm, it is an high aggravation of his crime, and he justly suffers condign punishment. But if one gentleman agree to meet another at an appointed time and place, armed with weapons of destruction and prepared for bloodshed and slaughter—such a defiance of law is deemed an "honourable" action. If one of the parties should fall, it is not to be deemed a murder on one side, or a species of voluntary suicide on the other; though the meeting at all for the purpose of the duel (and consequently all its eventual casualties) was as contrary to the statutes of the land provided against common and self-murder, as is the act of the highwayman, who stops and fires at you on the road. But "gentlemen" it seems may claim the exclusive privilege of pistoling one another whenever they please, not only with impunity, but also with honour. Yet notwithstanding the cover of fashionable practice, such an established and notorious breach of the laws (even by those, who make them, and in consequence who are most bound to uphold their own authority in the observance of them) is a grievous offence against good government:—an assumption of private authority, whereby the parties themselves are constituted by themselves, both judges and executioners in their own cause, and consequently it is founded on a system of honour very inconsistent with the principles of common equity or sound justice.

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The insufficiency of the duel for clearing up the truth by deciding in favour of the injured party is also notorious, and consequently adds greatly to the justness of its reprehension. It satisfies indeed the point of honour, but the truth (if it be material to know it) remains in equal obscurity; unless we recur again to the maxims of ancient superstition, which presumed that victory was in all cases the handmaid of innocence:—but superstition is not the foible of the present age.

It is also an effect totally inadequate to its cause; as it either punishes too severely, or too little, or not at all, or not the offending party. For if the cause productive of the duel be ever so important, it may yet end in firing a few balls without effect, by which no punishment ensues to the guilty person, who has only run the same hazard with [T] the innocent one. If on the other hand
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[T] Indeed the hazards strictly speaking are by no means equal but much “against” the combatant of greater height and bulk of body, who may likewise “chance” to be the innocent person. The answer therefore that is recorded of the actor Quin (who was truly the big-bellied Falstaffe of his time) to one of a thin and spare habit, who challenged him, had reason as well as humour in it.—“Man, make thyself as fat as I am, and I will fight thee.”—The stake of life and death may also be very unequal on many other accounts, as well as on the “size” of the parties concerned; one instance of which is contained in the following letter, which was said to have been written not long since in answer to a challenge; and which contains much truth and propriety on the injustice of such a mode of proceeding.

“SIR,

You say I have insulted you, and the matter may or may not be so. But I possess too much good sense to risk my life against yours for so foolish a circumstance, as I am at present situated. It is however in your power if you choose to fight, to enable me to meet you.—You are an unmarried man with a good fortune; and if you were shot through the head to-morrow, there could be only a fashionable tear for your exit, and the heir at law would rejoice at the circumstance. I am a married man and have a wife and nine children, an aged mother, and two sisters, who all depend on me for their support. They have no other father, husband, brother, son, or protector; and I am but tenant for life to an estate, which at my decease, if I die before my aged mother, goes to a family with whom I have been long at law, and who in this case would not give a sixpence to mine.—I regard the punctilios of a gentleman as much as any other person, provided those punctilios are within the bounds of common sense; and therefore in order to prove to you, that I am not afraid to meet you in the bullet-field of honour, I hereby propose to fight you either with pistols or swords, whenever you shall have secured, in case of my being killed, 200*l.* per ann. to my wife, and 50*l.* per ann. to each of my children during their lives. This will enable them to live when I am gone. If you do not comply
with

the cause be ever so trifling, the issue may be very serious, and its consequences severe and even deadly :—added to which the punishment may fall on the head of the innocent instead of the offending party. Allowing then for a moment the principle of self-satisfaction against an offender to be ever so proper and becoming, where breathes that spirit of strict equity and scrupulous justice, which should exalt the character and conduct of the gentleman above that of the common man? Where is the discrimination of truth or the proofs of innocence, which should guide the gentleman in all his researches, when the decisions of the sword and pistol are so partial and inadequate; when they are trifling or severe, bloody or insignificant, as mere chance directs; when the offender and offended stand on an equal precipice of danger, and the injured person is giving his antagonist an opportunity of injuring him still more, by taking his very life from him?—Strange code of private law, where all offences are placed on the same level and undergo the same species of punishment! where personal satisfaction or resentment forms the principle, and murder too frequently the conclusion!

The crying sin of murder (which so frequently follows this sort of honourable revenge) [u] needs no enlargement; since its guilt is readily acknowledged, as we may hope, by every duellist. But the misfortune is, that if either of the parties fall, it is not esteemed the murder of another, or a species of voluntary self-murder in the sufferer, but only a mode of honourable death.—All the arguments therefore against these heinous offences are overlooked by the advocates of the duel, as not affecting their cause. But notwithstanding all fashionable notions of honour, truth and reason will hold a different language. For what is murder, but to take away another man's life “contrary to law?” or what is

with this request, I shall suppose that your challenge was only a mere bravado, knowing what a family I have; and that you are afraid to meet me now that I have put it in your power to show, whether you have courage or not. You cannot plead want of money upon this occasion, because I know you have forty thousand pounds in stock exclusive of a clear estate of six thousand pounds per ann. I am, &c.”

[u] Perhaps the duellist may object to its being called revenge:—yet what is it that prompts to the duel, but the resenting or revenging a supposed injury done to the honour? But the noblest way of resenting or revenging an imputation on our honour, which we are conscious we do not deserve, is by rising superior to our injurer in the act of forgiveness, and being solicitous only “to live down” the malevolence of a slanderous tongue.

self-murder, but voluntarily and without necessity to be the means of accomplishing our own immediate death?—and what is the death procured in duelling but a conjunction of both?—So also if the cause of humanity and domestic feelings be pleaded against the duel—the sorrow of the aged parent—the distraction and desolation of the beloved wife and children; objects that seem to demand by every claim the most affectionate care and protection; yet all these amiable connexions and ties of tenderness are forced to yield to the more powerful influence of the laws of modern honour; which is a phantom preferred to the substance of friendly union, conjugal attachment, or parental affection; which is held dearer than life itself. Since then the duellist fights not only against his antagonist, but against law, justice, equity, and humanity, and consequently against all social, moral, and religious duty, he should have something very powerful to plead in favour of thus overturning every system that is amiable, interesting, and important in the concerns of human life. Let us hear his defence in the following chapter.

C H A P. IV.

THE DUELLIST'S DEFENCE, AND ANSWER TO IT.

C O N T E N T S.

The defender of the duel pleads in general the impulse of honour.—Difference between ancient and modern notions of honour.—The Roman temple of honour was only made accessible through the temple of virtue.—Duels in ancient times were fought no further for the personal honour of the combatants than as it was included in that of their country.—Modern honour much detached from public spirit and confined to personal punctilios.—Gothic notions of honour should have been buried in the same grave with Gothic ignorance and barbarism.—Personal courage an excellent ingredient in honour, but should be mixed with other good qualities of the heart to make it praise-worthy.—Courage much depends on the vigour of the body and animal

animal spirits, aided by certain habits of life and profession.—Courage will always meet with applause; but magnanimity is far preferable to it.—Grievous to think that a compliance with the duel should be made the test of courage; since magnanimity may lead the most truly courageous man to refuse it.—Personal courage not so good a test of civil, as it may be of military, honour.—Honour not to be estimated by one single action; nor all the good qualities of the heart to avail nothing against the disgrace (as it is deemed) of refusing the duel.—The man of “real honour” may be held to be infamous, and the man of “real infamy” honourable, by interpretation of the laws of modern honour.—That a gentleman has no other way of avenging his honour but by the duel, answered.—Reasons why he does not in fact repair his honour by these means.—If the cause of the duel be important, the law is open to determine its merits; if trifling, the spirit of revenge is too great in hazarding the duel: besides that the duel itself is a mode of private revenge specifically proscribed by law.—The dignity of forgiveness.—The duel only calculated to satisfy fashion, not for the reparation of real honour.—That the duel serves to keep young men within proper bounds of civility, answered.—The fearless audacity of youth often leads them to court rather than to avoid the duel.—The hazard of life or death too great a punishment for the inadvertencies of youth.—Gentle advice and further experience better remedies than the sword or pistol.—Exclusion from being noticed in the polite circle on misbehaviour might work to the same effect, as the dread of the duel; which many probably enter into from no other motive but the “fear” of such a sentence in case of refusal.—That it is of use to increase personal valour, answered.—This argument false in its principle, as the conduct of Greeks and Romans can testify.—Definitions of courage by the ancients.—Military ideas not to be too warmly espoused in a free government.—Different principles actuate the members of different forms of government. “Fear” in the despotic; “honour” in the monarchical; “virtue” in the republican.—No fear of want of courage in a republican government, when there is real occasion to exert it.—It is still further urged, that politeness of manners is advanced by the duel.—This contrary to experience, as witness the ages in which it was most openly countenanced; but as improvements were made in government and manners, it became more and more publicly discouraged.—It is to be hoped that courtesy of manners has a more solid foundation than the duel; what that foundation is.—The duel indefensible by argument and contrary to every idea of religion.

THE duellist pleads in general terms “the impulse of his wounded honour.” But of what nature must that honour be, which thus wantonly drives him to the precipice of destruction on the slightest occasion? Honour in its nature and genuine sense is a word so nearly allied in signification to truth, sound reason, and virtue, that

“Thin partitions do their bounds divide.”

So thought the Romans of it, when, as an elegant and instructive emblem, they made the temple of “Honour” only accessible through the temple of “Virtue:” so judged the Greeks, when they deemed it the greatest honour they could confer on an Aristides, to surname him “the Just.” Nor did these wise and polished nations, either in their rude or refined ages, ever find it necessary to guard the avenues of “their” honour by the practice of the duel on private accounts. The few duels mentioned in their histories were of a public [x] nature, and fought no further for the personal honour of the combatants, than as it was included in that of their country. But unhappily a less comprehensive notion of honour detached from all public spirit has crept into the world, which, under the gloss of martial punctilio, and enforced by the dazzling example of rank and fashion, sweeps down all before it. This confined and personal notion of it bears very hard on the ancient and genuine import of the word, and seems to demand an exclusive dominion over its future acceptation.

The Goths and Vandals (as well as their successors through several ages) might with some show of propriety insist on the exertion of personal valour, as the summit of all honourable perfection; because war being the sole occupation of the times, they were strangers to the blessings of peaceful life and to all the finer feelings of humanity and virtue: but as their system of ignorance and barbarous violence has been long since exploded, their opinions of honour should have been buried in the same grave. For when personal courage is not only deemed an excellent ingredient in the composition of honour, but in exclusion

[x] We read in the speech of Mettus Fuffetius, the Alban commander, to Tullus Hostilius, king of Rome, what gave birth in general to the duels of the ancients. “Ineamus aliquam viam quâ, utri utris imperent, sine magnâ clade, sine multo sanguine utriusque populi, decerni possit.” LIV. Lib. I. “Let us hit upon some expedient by which it may be determined, which nation shall command the other, without much slaughter and effusion of blood on both sides.”

of every thing else is made to constitute its very essence, a part is certainly substituted [Y] for the whole. For why are the good qualities of the heart, which shine forth in the general conduct, to make no necessary part of the definition of a man of honour? Why are the bright and conspicuous points of social and domestic character to submit in fashionable estimation to the mere formation of the bodily organs, to the temperament and flow of the animal spirits, on which involuntary machinery the exertions of personal bravery are known very much to depend? But this natural frame and constitution of the body is also much aided and influenced in its production of personal courage by certain habits of life, of profession and character, which stimulate to its exertion. The soldiery for instance evidently impel one another on to feats of intrepidity, which each individual, were he not sensible of the presence of his comrades, might not so readily perform. A familiarity likewise with the instruments of destruction and death, and a frequent sight of all their terrible havocks, certainly contribute to deaden the mind towards that dread of their effects, which might otherwise be apt to seize a novice in the ways of bloodshed. From these extraneous causes, to which must be added the fear of shame and ignominy, which would attend a contrary behaviour, many an one is spirited on to make an artificial show of steadiness, resolution, and courage.

[Y] "If we will mind what effects man's bravery, without any other qualifications to sweeten him, would have out of an army, we shall find that it would be very pernicious to civil society. For if a man could conquer all his fears, you would hear of little else but rapine and violence of all sorts, and valiant men would be like giants in romance. Politics therefore discovered in men a mixt principle, which was a compound of justice, honesty, and all the moral virtues joined to courage, and all that were possessed of it turned knights-errant of course. They did abundance of good throughout the world, by taming monsters, delivering the distressed, and killing of oppressors. But the wings of all the dragons being clipt, the giants destroyed, and the damsels every where set at liberty (except some few in Spain and Italy, who remain still captivated by their religious monsters) the order of chivalry to whom the standard of ancient honour belonged, has been laid aside for some time. It was like their armour, very massy and heavy: the many virtues about it served to make it very troublesome; and as ages grew wiser and wiser, the principle of honour at the beginning of the last century (about 1600) was melted over again and brought into a new standard. They put in the same weight of courage, half the quantity of honesty, and a very little justice, but not a scruple of any other virtue, which has made it very easy and portable to what it was. However such as it is, there would be no doing without it in a large nation," &c. (The author then goes on defending the duel on principles of modern honour, as the arbiter of politeness, &c.)—See MANDEVILLE'S Remarks on Honour in "Fable of the Bees."

But whatever be the causes and incitements to courage, its actual exertions will always meet with admiration, because men look up to its achievements with a degree of fear and respect; and they pay a deference to its possessor, because they either feel themselves secure under his protection, or dread the effects of his prowess. Besides, the destroyers of men having always been more celebrated than their benefactors, and the dazzling splendor of conquest having been made the favourite theme of poets and historians, no wonder that personal courage has ever been held in such high estimation, gained so much applause, and almost adoration. But it is melancholy to reflect, that the duel should ever have been the test of personal courage and honourable report; insomuch that a man once stigmatized for a refusal (whatever were his motives) must be deemed ever after incapable of performing one honourable action, or of deserving the attention of his equals in life. For supposing this refusal to have proceeded from a principle far superior to what is usually called courage, viz. from a magnanimity of temper capable of exalting its line of conduct above the frowns of fashion, and of following up in practice the suggestions of its own judgment and conscience in abhorrence of the duel—what injustice and inhumanity is exercised in excluding such a truly honourable character from polite society; to which we ought rather to look up with respect and deference, as an example most worthy of imitation! Or even granting (what however is not always to be granted) that personal courage was wanting in a refusal of the duel, yet though bravery be a “necessary and professional” quality in the military order, when exerted against the public enemy, why the idea is from thence to be conveyed into the walks of private life amid peaceable subjects, as the test of “their” honourable conduct, is not perhaps so easy to account for [z], and still less to justify.

Besides, is a man’s honour to be estimated by one single action, or not rather by the general tenour of his conduct? For let a person be ever so distinguished in his general behaviour for the practice of honesty, justice, and moderation; let him be ever so conspicuous for his public worth or private humanity; let him fill his station in all the active and social duties of life with ever so distinguished a degree of affectionate attention, propriety, and dignity; let him be

[z] This idea will be pursued further hereafter.

affable and courteous, liberal and benevolent, virtuous and pious in his whole conduct and manners; nay what is more, let even his manly spirit and true courage have shown eminently forth at times that required its useful exertion; yet if such an one should dare, from a thorough conviction of its impropriety and sinfulness, to refuse giving or accepting a challenge, when the laws of modish honour seemed to demand it—are all these continued and amiable exertions to be of no avail in forming an opinion of his future character, or in wiping off the supposed stain of dishonour and the forfeiture of fashionable disgrace? Is the merit of an whole life of strict virtue and laudable pursuit to sink at once into oblivion, and the injured possessor of so many shining endowments and useful qualities altogether to be shunned, declared infamous and unworthy of polite association? These are hardships unbecoming a generous people in an enlightened age, and call aloud for a speedy and effectual redress.

But a further mischief is, that while the man of “real honour” may be thus put under the ban of flight and contempt, the man of “real infamy” may be seen strutting without fear of reproach or consciousness of shame in every gay and fashionable circle. For though a man pays no debts but those of gambling, though he squanders his patrimony to the distress and ruin of his family, though he prostitutes the charms of female innocence or riots on the couch of adulterous connexion, in equal despite perhaps of hospitality and friendship, yet he forfeits no title to attention and honour in the rounds of polite intercourse. If he call forth that friend to the duel, whose most tender ties he has polluted, for presuming to join his name with villainy, or meet him on his own demand and heap injury on injury by stabbing him to the heart, he still loses no pretensions to the title of a man of fashionable honour. Strange associations these of the most discordant ideas! strange perversion of the word honour, which can take shelter under such false principles, and lean on such a rotten foundation! which can be guilty of so much harsh and illiberal treatment! can associate with injustice, debauchery, and vice, without scruple or fear of derogation from its own dignity; but which is ready to blacken the character and to teach all others to shun the society of a most virtuous liver, because perhaps he has exhibited a specimen of exalted courage and real magnanimity, in resolving at all adventures to be governed by the decisions of truth
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and conscience, in opposition to an inglorious and murderous custom of the fashionable [A] world!

It is urged further in defence of the duel, "that a man of honour, who wears a sword, has no other way of avenging those personal affronts, of which the law cannot take cognizance, but by making use of that sword, and demanding the usual satisfaction of a gentleman in behalf of his injured honour."—

But

[A] A custom———"honourable
Without the stamp of merit."——SHAKESPEARE.

The following is an excellent and succinct account of the Law of Honour.—"The law of honour is a system of rules constructed by people of fashion and calculated to facilitate their intercourse with one another; and for no other purpose. Consequently nothing is adverted to by the law of honour, but what tends to incommode this intercourse. Hence this law only prescribes and regulates the duties "betwixt equals;" omitting such as relate to the Supreme Being, as well as those, which we owe to our inferiors. For which reason, profaneness, neglect of public worship or private devotion, cruelty to servants, rigorous treatment of tenants or other dependents, want of charity to the poor, injuries done to tradesmen by insolvency or delay of payment, with numberless examples of the same kind, are accounted no breaches of honour, because a man is not a less agreeable companion for these vices, nor the worse to deal with in those concerns, which are usually transacted between one gentleman and another. Again; the law of honour being constituted by men occupied in the pursuit of pleasure and for the mutual conveniency of such men, will be found, as might be expected from the character and design of the law-makers, to be in most instances favourable to the licentious indulgence of the natural passions. Thus it allows of fornication, of adultery, drunkenness, prodigality, duelling, and revenge in the extreme; and lays no stress upon the virtues opposite to these."——PALEY's Moral and Political Philosophy, C. ii.

"But a phantom conjured up by the gay and fashionable in modern times assumes the dignified and hallowed name of honour, is substituted in the room of every thing holy and divine, and made the god of universal idolatry. In the world's vocabulary or courtly dialect of the day, he is an honourable man, whose debts of honour are punctually discharged, though at the expence of his tradesmen; who is prodigal and profuse in the purchase of pleasure, and all alive to the instigations of revenge. So that this mighty principle, the supreme boast and distinction of an enlightened age, when properly analyzed, consists only in a violent attachment to the gaming-table, inordinate indulgence in all the pursuits of sensuality, and a savage propensity for fighting: qualities, which more virtuous times, which the best and greatest men that ever lived, which sound reason, which true religion, have all agreed to explode and stamp with infamy and contempt. Is it from the influence of a sentiment like this we are to look for the manly, but modest virtues of the christian life; those tender sensibilities, which give us an interest in the concerns of each other; those condescensions and humilities, which render us the friends and benefactors, not the foes and disturbers of the species; all those amiable and efficient sympathies, which impel us to share our enjoyments with the unfortunate, the forlorn, or the miserable? Indeed

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But how (it must be asked) can the duel really repair the injured honour? The combatants meet on the most equal footing; the truth or falsehood of the imputed slur remains obscure as before; innocence and guilt are placed on the same level; neither can the point of the sword nor the random-bullet determine the question of right and wrong. Of as little force towards wiping off any stain is the spirit of revenge; which may be equally roused (perhaps more easily) by a true as a false accusation. Now if ever private revenge may be deemed excusable in a well-regulated government, it must be in those instances for which the laws have not provided sufficient remedies. But then the avenger of his own cause must take especial care, that the nature of his resentment breaks through no positive and established law; for then it must forfeit all pretensions to excuse: but the duel being expressly forbidden by the laws, that mode of revenge must be totally unjustifiable. If the matter in dispute be important, and truth (not revenge) the object of pursuit, the law will sufficiently determine on its merits; and with the decisions of public justice every good subject should rest satisfied. If for instance the military character of an officer be attacked by a brother-soldier, why should not the determinations of a court-martial (which might be easily erected also into a court of honour, whose awards should be final in the eye of fashion) be deemed as decisive with respect to public estimation and honour, as the uncertain event of the duel.—On the other hand, if the cause leading to the duel be trifling, how can it justify the hazard of two lives, both important perhaps to their country, friends, and families? or how

no ears are so deaf to the complaints of the wretched, as theirs, who are accustomed to incessant flattery, stunned by the altercation of gamblers, sated by the noise of intemperance, or distracted by the bustle and requisitions of ceremony. The man of gaiety and dissipation is a perfect churl in whatever does not contribute to his own immediate gratification. The vain man, though seldom among the first to explore the haunts of modest distress or abate the rigour of private misfortune, will endow an hospital, swell the list of any public charity, and grudge no expence to monopolise the plaudits of a moment.—The man of fashion spends all and often more than he can spare, in decorating himself for shining in the circles he frequents; and is so engrossed by company, compliment, punctilio, and personal admiration, that he has neither time nor heart to admit the claims of humanity.”—See “Private Worth the Basis of public Decency; or an Address to People of Rank and Fortune. By a Member of Parliament, 1789.”

“A modern English honour seems no more than the ghost of departed principles; and it produces those effects in the general behaviour and conduct of life, which might reasonably be expected from such a shadowy non-entity.”—BROWNE’S Estimate of Manners, Vol. I. p. 176.

is the offence proportionate to the satisfaction required, when the former perhaps consisted in a few hasty words or expressions of anger, and the latter teems with wounds and bloodshed? Besides, is there not a dignity in forgiveness, when it arises from a pure unfulled heart, which he alone can truly feel, who "has" forgiven? Can a greater punishment oftentimes be inflicted on an offender than by passing over his offence with the silent contempt it may deserve?—"In taking revenge (says Bacon) a man is but "even" with his enemy, but in passing "it over he is his "superior;" for it is a prince's part to pardon." All then that is performed by the duel is for the satisfaction of fashion, not for the "real" reparation of honour.

Again it is said; "that the notions of fashionable honour exemplified in the duel are of great service to counteract the petulance and effrontery of young men, who are apt to be too full of themselves and their own importance; who would dictate to wise and experienced men, would abuse characters without discretion and judgment, and deal about scandal without civility of language or politeness of manners:—such behaviour (it is said) in youth is much restrained and corrected by the awe of the duel." But it may be doubted, whether a dread of engaging in the duel does often produce the desirable effect now under consideration; since the same vivacity of spirits, if united with personal courage, which sometimes leads a young man beyond the bounds of decorum, would be apt to lead him also to court rather than to shun the duel. The juvenile age, being naturally thoughtless and fearless, is in consequence very little cautious of avoiding personal danger. Whatever concurs with childish notions will be greedily devoured at this early period of life, and many an occasion seized of rushing into the destruction of the single combat, which the experience of maturer years would have easily and honourably avoided. But even allowing young men to be kept in some awe through fear of the duel, it must be further inquired—is this a punishment proportioned to the offence? What!—because a giddy youth, in the full exertion of his spirits, suffers his language or his actions so far to exceed the bounds of propriety, as to offend against the rules of polite manners, must he therefore be consigned over to the hazard of death in the vigour of his days, or be made liable to commit murder himself on another? His conduct probably proceeds from inexperience alone, which a few years would necessarily correct. He neither means perhaps nor is sensible of that

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harm,

harm, which he may possibly occasion to others by the flippancy of his tongue. Let then an interpretation mild as possible be put on his words and actions, when they proceed not from ill qualities of the heart; let any harshness and incivility of his address or language be attributed to a juvenile carelessness and inadvertency of behaviour; let him be brought to a better sense of things by the kind intimations and gentle advice of his friends, not by the terror of the sword and pistol. Some better method might surely be devised to correct the unguarded language or improper behaviour of youth, than one which teaches him to defy the laws of his country, to prosecute private revenge, to lay aside moral rectitude, to sport with friendly or domestic feelings, and to offend against every point of humanity, justice, and religion. This is indeed purchasing mere civility of behaviour at a dear rate, even at the expence of every thing that ought to be held important and sacred. But if after all gentler methods were tried of making a young man of distinction not exceed the bounds of propriety and decorum in fashionable deportment (for as to his moral and religious character there are little pains taken to regulate that), why might he not be threatened with (or actually suffer for a time when necessary) the same exclusion from all polite circles, as would fall to his lot in case he refused a duel? and why would not the same dread hang over him with the same effect, which perhaps alone inclined him to fight the duel? Why would not this work to as good purpose on his future behaviour, and in a way much more consistent with every duty of life, as well as without an hazard of murderous consequences to himself or others?

Another argument used in favour of this practice is—"that the punctilious honour, which flies to the duel, as its citadel of defence, is of the utmost importance in preserving and heightening the exertion of personal courage and valour in the day of battle; that if the practice were totally annihilated, the army (as well as other departments of life) would be filled with mean and cowardly spirits; that honour is the life and soul of military establishments; and that in order to keep up the true spirit of honour, its ideas must be brought as much into private as public life; and therefore as an appeal to the sword is the last resource in national [B] quarrels, so it must be also in all those personal

[B] The appeal to arms is indeed the last resource of sovereign princes, because they have no superior on earth to determine their differences. Every duellist therefore makes himself as it were an independent sovereign, when he appeals only to his sword.

differences between individuals, which are of a nature not to be settled by law or amicable adjustment.”—But much may be said against this argument. In the first place it is ill-grounded in its principle; since the opinion, that personal bravery is increased by the encouragement of the duel, is neither founded in reason nor fact. Experience proves the direct contrary. Did the Greeks and Romans (for recourse must be had again to those wise and valorous nations) ever want courage to defend their country, to face their enemies, or to surprise the inhabitants of the most distant regions with their military exploits? But they never thought of improving this valiant spirit by exerting it one against another in revenge of private [c] piques and personal animosities. They would have deemed a wanton display of courage to no useful purpose as mean and dastardly, as they esteemed encountering their public foes to be glorious and honourable: in short their notions of honour were so just and genuine, that they considered the nature of every action in itself before they pronounced it either reputable or courageous. “That elevation of mind (says Tully) which exerts itself in
 “undergoing dangers and difficulties, if it be not founded in justice, or fight
 “not for the public good, but its own private advantage, is vicious. For such
 “a courage has not only nothing to do with virtue, but is rather to be con-
 “sidered as a brutal ferocity repelling all ideas of gentleness and humanity. The
 “Stoics therefore well define [D] fortitude; when they call it “that virtue,
 “which contends for equity.” Wherefore no one, who has gained the reputa-
 “tion of courage by treachery or wickedness, is deserving of praise; since no-
 “thing can be honourable, which is void of justice. Excellent also is the saying
 “of Plato,—“that as that knowledge, which takes not justice for its principle,

[c] Antony indeed challenged Octavius to single combat, but it was in the extremity of his own fortunes; when Cæsar was too prudent to return any other than the following answer—“that if Antony chose to die, there were other ways of doing it than that he proposed.”—Marius sent much the same sort of answer (though in terms more adapted to the roughness of his own manners) to a commander of the enemy, who challenged him to single combat—“if the fellow want to die, let him go and hang himself.” Thus it was thought no want of courage in those days to decline the duel: nor has it been thought so in modern times, when princes have refused challenges from each other, as has frequently been the case.

[D] How little true courage can the duellist boast of according to this just definition!—Modern honour is courageous only to preserve its own fashionable character; but honesty acts upon general principles of equity and justice, even to its own detriment: there can be little doubt therefore in determining their comparative excellence.

“ought

“ ought to be called cunning rather than wisdom, so a disposition ever ready to
 “ encounter danger at the impulse of its own inordinate passions and not for
 “ the sake of public benefit, deserves to be censured as rash and audacious rather
 “ than brave and honourable [E].”—Such sentiments as these (it may be
 readily perceived) would never have led to the encouragement of the duel according to modern practice; of which indeed these illustrious people had no experience.

But it may further be answered, that though in a monarchical government there may be reasons assigned for the cultivation of military honour, and for the exaltation of the military profession above all others, yet the subjects of a free government should not be overfond of espousing the ideas of the camp, or of introducing a soldier's points of honour, into the habits of civil life;—such points especially as are inconsistent with the laws of the land, with moral obligation and religious duty. The judicious Montesquieu has well defined the principles that actuate the members of different forms of government, and has shown, how each being adapted to its own form cannot be introduced into the habits of another without manifest danger. “ The laws of education (says he) will be different in each species of government. In monarchies (that is, as he defines, where a single person governs by fixed and established laws) they will have “honour” for their object: in republics (that is, where the people are possessed with a share of the supreme power) “virtue:” in despotic governments (where a single person rules by his own will) “fear.” In monarchies, the principal branch of education commences, when we set out in the world; for this is the school of what we call honour. The virtues we are taught in this school are less what we owe to others than to ourselves; they are not so much what assimilates us to, as what distinguishes us from, our fellow-creatures. Here the actions of men are not judged as good, but as shining; not as just, but as great; not as reasonable, but as extraordinary. Honour allows of gallantry, when united with the idea of sensible affection or with that of conquest. This is the reason, why we never meet with so strict a purity of morals in monarchies as in republican governments. There is nothing that “honour” more strongly recommends than to serve their prince in a military capacity; in fact this is the favourite profession of honour,

[E] See Tully's Offices, Book I. 19.

“ because:

“ because its dangers, its success, and even its miscarriages are the road to grandeur.” (Spirit of Laws, B. IV. C. i, ii.)—“ In a republican government the whole powers of education may be exerted. The “ fear” of despotic governments rises of itself amid threats and punishments. “ The “ honour” of monarchies is favoured by the passions and favours them in return: but “ “ virtue” is a self-renunciation, which is always arduous and painful.” (B. IV. C. v.)—“ We have only to cast an eye on a nation that may be justly called a republic disguised under the form of a monarchy, and we shall see, how jealous they (the English) are of making a separate order of the profession of arms, and how the military state is constantly allied to that of the citizen and even of the magistrate, to the end that these qualities may be a pledge to their country, which should never be forgotten.” (B. V. C. xix.)—“ Military men are in England regarded as belonging to a profession, which may be useful, but is often dangerous; civil qualifications are therefore more esteemed than military.” (B. XIX. C. xxvii.)—But there is an urbanity and politeness in the behaviour of those of the military profession, arising from their enlarged intercourse with the inhabitants of various districts and various countries, which makes their manners insinuating, even where their order is regarded with a jealous eye. This is plain from that ready, though faulty, assent, which is given to their maxims of honour and personal courage, which are made the standards of merit even in the intercourse of peaceful life. Some have asserted, that we should become a pusillanimous nation, if a less stress were laid than is at present on that species of personal courage, which is exhibited in the duel. But the annals of all ages afford us a sufficient proof and consolation, that in all cases of emergency the free-born subjects of a free nation, through that natural enthusiasm which a love of their country inspires, will strain every nerve of courage in defence of their liberty or warlike glory—“ without having been “ previously disciplined in the school of duelling or modern [F] honour.”

It

[F] “ I own that from republican governments the practice of duelling may be proscribed, because there the courage of the people is sufficiently fostered by an enthusiastic love of their country; which powerful incentive alone can elevate their troops to superior boldness, and make them perform such astonishing acts of valour, as are to be found in the Greek and Roman histories.”—See History of Duelling in France, from the French of M. Coustard de Massi, p. 94, who is a great advocate for duelling under monarchical governments.

Montagne

It is still further urged in behalf of the practice, "that it is the general promoter of politeness, courtesy, and good manners amongst all the different orders of gentry; that without such a barrier against the encroachments of rudeness and ill-breeding, all the pleasures of social and agreeable intercourse would be in danger of degenerating into gross freedoms and habits of incivility; whereas now gentlemen are kept within due bounds of speech and courteous behaviour, as knowing they cannot offend without hazard of the duel." But here again facts and experience prove the contrary. Are the first introducers of this practice into Europe most conspicuous for their extraordinary share of politeness, or for their rude barbarity? Are the ages that succeeded their irruptions (and which were maddened with the fury of the duel) most distinguished in the annals of history for their uncommon courtesy of manners, or for their gross ignorance and fierceness of conduct? Or can it be denied, but that, as improvements in society and good government stole gradually on, the duel became less and less countenanced in public, and that princes began to issue severe edicts against its practice? This evinces the sense of it that prevailed in the hour of cool and deliberate judgment. When the human mind opened to the convictions of truth and reason, and the sun of science arose and dispelled the thick clouds of ignorance and superstition, more enlarged ideas were introduced into every part of legislation; public justice began to rear its venerable head, and

Montagne has the following observations on fencing and duelling (*Ess. Vol. II. B. ii. C. 27.*) "I know fencing is an art very useful in its end, and of which the knowledge has inspired some with courage above their natural talent. But this is not properly valour, because it supports itself upon address, and is founded on something besides itself. The honour of combat consists in the jealousy of courage and not of skill; and therefore I have known a friend of mine famed for a mastery in this exercise, who in his quarrels made choice of such arms as might deprive him of this advantage; that his victory might not be ascribed to his skill, but to his valour. When I was young, gentlemen avoided the reputation of being good fencers, as injurious to them, and learned with all imaginable privacy to fence, as a trade of subtilty derogating from true, and natural courage. Butts, tiltings, and barriers, the images of warlike fights, were the exercises of our forefathers. But the exercise of duelling is so much the less noble, as it only respects a private end, that teaches us to ruin one another against law and justice, and that every way always produces very ill effects. Philopemen condemned wrestling (wherein he himself excelled) because the preparations it required did not appertain to military discipline, in which alone he conceived men of honour should be engaged. Plato also interdicts the art of cuffing and wrestling, because they tend to no service in war. So it seems to me, that the address to which we form our limbs, those writhings and motions young men are taught in this new school of fencing, are not only of no use, but rather contrary and hurtful to fight in battle; and also our people commonly make use of particular weapons and peculiarly designed for the duel."

to oppose its own legal awards against the partial and vague determinations of private revenge.

It is true indeed that duels still continued to be fought in great numbers, notwithstanding the laws that had been made to suppress them; but the combatants were driven into evasions and the shelter of retirement, for their now "illegal" as well as always immoral and irreligious practice. However the brave and accomplished age of Lewis XIV. in which duels were so thoroughly discountenanced, is a strong proof, that this murderous practice was in no shape approved or deemed necessary by the courteous and gallant heroes of that age, for the encouragement or existence of either valour or politeness. For it is to be hoped, that a refinement of manners has some more solid and rational foundation than the fear of the bloody duel; which appears from the historic page to have been much more connected in its rise and progress with ferocity than gentleness, with barbarism than civility. Courtesy of behaviour arises from the improvement of the understanding and enlargement of the social affections. A free intercourse, (which seldom obtains in the infancy of a state) with the inhabitants of different nations wonderfully contributes to refine and polish the habits of life. We see their opinions and customs clashing perhaps with our own, but not therefore necessarily inferior in point of propriety and usefulness. In this social intercourse we cannot but see some things to admire and imitate, as well as others to censure and avoid; and the general result is, that we hereby enlarge our own contracted notions and gradually improve in all polite acquisitions. Thus a general courtesy and mildness of behaviour, is brought on, by which we are taught to pay a just deference and respect to the opinions of others; by which we learn a moderation in the delivery of our own sentiments, as well as a general sensibility and benevolence in all our habits of life; in short every thing is effected with regard to civilized and polished behaviour, that the most strenuous advocate for the duel can hope to obtain from a recourse to his violent and inhuman practice of dealing about wounds and bloodshed on many a trifling occasion.

Beside which, were the laws against duelling not only severe in themselves, but strictly and impartially executed, and were they calculated to promote a living shame and suffering on their transgressors rather than an immediate death (since

(since death is despised in every challenge in comparison of honour, and therefore seems not a proper punishment on this occasion) the awe of such restraining statutes as no one could hope to escape, would work as powerfully towards polishing and brightening society, by rendering the great and fashionable cautious and circumspect in their personal behaviour, as any fear of the duel itself could possibly effect: and thus the same end would be accomplished by less exceptionable means.

It is apparent then on how weak a foundation the duel rests, when attempted to be defended by dint of argument, or even by the principles of "true and substantial" honour; and that though a "sudden" attack upon another, who has insulted us, may meet with some degree of palliation or excuse from the immediate impulse of anger, and thus far be called a natural revenge, yet that a deliberate challenge to fight in cool blood at a distance of time from the provocation can never proceed from a magnanimous, forgiving, or christian frame of mind. The author of the "Fable of the Bees," though a pleader for the custom of duelling, acknowledges thus much in his remarks on "honour."—"The only thing of weight that can be said against modern honour is, that it is directly opposite to religion. The one bids you bear injuries with patience; the other tells you, if you do not resent them, you are not fit to live. Religion commands you to leave all revenge to God:—honour bids you trust your revenge to no one but yourself, even where the law would do it for you. Religion plainly forbids murder:—honour openly justifies it. Religion bids you not shed blood on any account whatever:—honour bids you fight for the least trifle. Religion is built on humility, and honour on pride. How to reconcile them must be left to wiser heads than mine."—It would indeed puzzle the wisest.

C H A P. V.

THE CASE OF THOSE CONSIDERED, WHO, THOUGH THEY ABHOR THE PRINCIPLE, YET DEEM IT NECESSARY TO COMPLY WITH THE PRACTICE.—ADDRESS TO THE GENTLEMEN OF THE ARMY IN PARTICULAR, WHY THEY SHOULD DISCOURTEGE THE DUEL.

C O N T E N T S.

Not all approve, who practise the duel.—A great proof of the tyranny of fashionable honour over the dictates of virtue and conscience.—Those, who comply unwillingly through principles of virtue not to be too rashly censured.—Such plead the force of inveterate custom; and so far are less censurable than others, as they pretend not to defend its principle.—This plea very prevalent, but still it rests on a weak foundation.—Reflections of the involuntary duellist on the principles of truth, reason, and religion, against which nothing can be urged, but the tyranny of an arbitrary custom.—It is too general a maxim to plead custom against every attempt at reformation.—True boundaries of a compliance with custom,—should be confined to things “indifferent,” not extended to “sinful” ones.—A life of honour should be coveted by all; only difference lies in its interpretation.—Inquiry how the duel is to be discountenanced?—Human laws against it too relax in their discipline:—divine ones thought distant in their punishment (though immediately hazarded by the duel)—and therefore both too much neglected.—Some hints relative to its punishment; not to be by death, but by shame and disgrace at court, and exclusion from civil and military employment.—But the best means of its effectual discouragement would be, by an introduction of juster principles of honour, viz. by extending honour to moral and religious obligation.—This must commence among military men of distinguished bravery;—the method must be left to themselves, but some one should be adopted; as it is altogether absurd to be governed by a usage of ignorance and slavery in the days of illumination and freedom.

HAVING answered those in the former chapter, who defend the practice of duelling, as useful and honourable in itself, it now remains to notice the arguments of such, as actually abhor it in all its principles, but yet find themselves under a necessity of submitting to its practice, or of suffering the most

most cruel and unmerited hardships. For it is well known, that numbers, who neither hesitate to give nor to accept a challenge, when honour points that way, are yet utter enemies to the murderous usage, and cordially wish, that some other mode of personal satisfaction less barbarous and cruel could be devised in its stead. They are sensible that equity, justice, morality, and religion are all against them; they see the evil they are countenancing by their own example; they know the contempt they are throwing on all civil authority; they are sensible that they are breaking through every tie of social duty,—and yet renouncing all their own ideas of right and wrong, they implicitly obey the injunctions of modern honour, in opposition to the clearest dictates of their own consciences. The calmness also and composure with which they proceed to this horrid business, the adjustment of the ceremonials of the combat, the previous settlement of all their worldly affairs, and even their prayers to the Almighty [G] to pardon the sin, the acknowledged sin, which they are about to commit in compliance with the wicked customs of the world, are so many astonishing proofs of the force and prevalence of wayward fashion over sound judgment and reason; of the despotic tyranny and usurpation of the flitting phantom, “honour,” over the solid and substantial form of “virtue.”

But yet let us not judge too harshly of those, who may be unfortunately driven into so distressing a situation; since it is easier to find fault in theory than to avoid it in practice. The inveteracy of an opinion, however erroneous, is neither easily eradicated nor even contradicted with impunity. A compliance indeed with the ideas of modern honour too often implies a want of forgiveness

[G] The following was given in the public prints of that date, as the preamble of the will made by Lieutenant-Colonel T—— the evening previous to his fatal interview with a brother-officer.

“London, Wednesday-night, Sept. 3, 1783.

“I am now called upon, and by the rules of what is called honour, “forced” into a personal interview with Colonel ——. God only can know the event, and into his hands I commit my soul, conscious only of having done my duty. I therefore declare this to be my last will and testament. “In the first place I commit my soul to Almighty God, in hopes of his mercy and pardon for the irreligious step I now, in compliance with the unwarrantable customs of this wicked world, put myself “under the necessity of taking,” &c. &c.

and benevolence, of affection and humanity, of deference and submission to the laws of God and man. But a refusal of the duel is attended with such mortifying circumstances, with such an imputation of meanness and cowardice (how little soever perhaps deserved), with such a studied contempt in public, and exclusion from the polite circle in private, as renders the alternative both cruel and inhuman. For though a man of "real magnanimity" may not only despise in his heart, but have spirit enough to resist in his conduct, such customs of the world as fight against truth and justice, morality and religion, yet such an exertion is the lot of but a few, nor can these few effect it, but at the expence perhaps of their present comforts and future prospects in life. Where shame and reproach follow a submission to laws, (which however ought never to be the case) those laws are apt to be very little regarded. The generality of mankind are much more affected by the dread of present censure than of future punishment; and therefore do they rush into a compliance with this barbarous custom, in the very midst of their dislike and abhorrence of its practice. But in this forced compliance they are so far less censurable than others, in that they acknowledge the sinfulness of their own conduct, without seeking to defend the erroneous principles on which they act. For while the advocate of duelling is advancing all his flimsy notions of politeness and courage as hanging on the point of his sword, the unwilling duellist through principle is reflecting, that though the alternative be really dreadful and unsurmountable to many, yet that its decision in truth will not admit of a moment's doubt; since a custom in itself cruel, vindictive, unlawful, immoral, and irreligious, must necessarily rest on a rotten foundation, however it may seem to be supported by the glare of fashion.

" I am prone to censure my ancestors (must an involuntary duellist be ready
 " to exclaim) for establishing such a pernicious custom, and yet am I not by
 " my own compliance giving it all countenance and support in my own times?
 " What blame then can I throw on those of ruder ages, which I shall not de-
 " serve myself in a much higher degree from posterity? If the immediate cen-
 " sures of the world be apt to work more powerfully in my breast than the fear
 " of distant or divine punishment, yet am I not voluntarily drawing nigh to
 " the danger of that punishment, with the additional and heinous aggravation
 " of

“ of being my own murderer? If there be guilt in murder in the sight of God
 “ or man, am I not rushing forward to imbrue my hands in the blood of a
 “ fellow-creature or to stain his with mine? Is not this to be the murderer
 “ either of myself or of another, or possibly of both?—How shall I justify such
 “ a conduct even before an earthly tribunal, whose laws I am thus about to
 “ violate, or before an heavenly one, whose precepts both against revenge and
 “ bloodshed I am thus setting at defiance? What will it avail to plead the
 “ empty, supercilious pleas of an affronted honour at the tribunal of “heaven,”
 “ though it must be allowed, that they often meet with too favourable a con-
 “ struction on “earth.” Shall I then be wholly guided by the principles of
 “ modern honour, which are so essentially founded on pride, revenge, and re-
 “ sentment of trifles, or shall I rather take shelter under those of friendship and
 “ forgiveness, of love, humanity, and universal benevolence? Shall I place my
 “ notions of honour, where the good and wise of all nations have placed theirs,
 “ viz. in the practice of equity and justice, of obedience to the laws of virtue
 “ and piety; or merely in avoiding the imputation of personal cowardice, as
 “ supposed to be established in a refusal of the duel? Shall I dread the jeers of
 “ a modish and unthinking world more than the reproaches of my inward mo-
 “ nitor? Shall I sacrifice the good report of my own heart at the altar of levity
 “ and fashion? Shall I break through all the ties of social, friendly, conjugal,
 “ and paternal affection, to meet the man in bloody combat, who, by some un-
 “ guarded expression or thoughtless action, has committed a trifling offence
 “ against me? and though he were my best and dearest friend, shall all our pre-
 “ vious affection and mutual good offices be forgotten in a moment, and we
 “ become the murderers of each other—for what?—to satisfy the absurd and
 “ unmeaning claims of a ridiculous honour. Yes; the vindictive and oppres-
 “ sive laws of modern honour demand such cruel sacrifices. They neither listen
 “ to the voice of clemency, nor reason, nor conscience against their unjust and
 “ bloody mandates; but with a rigid and inflexible severity consign him over
 “ to disgrace and infamy, who dares to violate their absurd edicts.—But can it
 “ be courage wantonly to expose my own and another’s life to extreme dan-
 “ ger? Can it be bravery [H] to insult the laws of my country and to defy my

[H] Malarum rerum audacia a quibusdam fortitudo vocatur.—SALLUST.

“ God?

“ God? If so; then it is truly honourable to offend against every branch of
 “ duty. Yet surely a good and virtuous man will not thus sport with life. Will
 “ he not rather hope by the innocence and integrity of his conduct, the en-
 “ largement and generosity of his sentiments, to overcome the prejudices of in-
 “ dividuals and the false judgment of the fashionable world? Will he not
 “ esteem that exertion of courage, which is devoid of reason, to be no better
 “ than a brutal fierceness? and will not self-defence, if he be violently attacked,
 “ be his utmost aim?—If my character have been hitherto respectable, my man-
 “ ners virtuous, and personal courage on proper occasions unimpeached, my
 “ example may possibly have some influence on others, if I have the firmness
 “ on substantial grounds to refuse the duel; they must at least inwardly applaud,
 “ if not outwardly commend and imitate, my conduct.—But whatever may
 “ be the frowns of fashion, they cannot deprive me of the approbation of my
 “ own heart, or of the comforts and enjoyments of an untainted conscience, in
 “ having thus resolutely discharged my duty to God, my country, and myself,
 “ by a steady adherence to the principles of “ virtue and religion,” in opposition
 “ to the unjust decrees of an arbitrary fashion. But if for such an upright
 “ and truly honourable behaviour, I must be deprived of the pleasures of polite
 “ intercourse, and submit to the tyranny of vulgar prejudice, I retire with truth
 “ and reason on my side, with an honest heart and conscious dignity, which is
 “ the support and alleviation of unmerited sufferings.”

Many are sensible of the force of these arguments when uninterested in the
 decision, who yet (it is to be feared) would not have the resolution to abide by
 their own rational and virtuous principles in the hour of trial: since it is too
 general a maxim to plead fashion and the custom of the world, not only in be-
 half of following immoral practices, but in excuse for never attempting to cor-
 rect and reform them. But the influence of a mere habit or custom ought to
 be confined to things “ indifferent” in their own nature; whereas its power is
 extended beyond all due limits, when it demands a compliance with things
 immoral and intrinsically evil; nor can all the principles of modern honour,
 united with the utmost stretch of fashionable observance, justify the encroach-
 ment.

It is agreed on all hands, that a life of "honour" should be the aim of every gentleman. The only difference between the advocates for the duel and its opposers lies in the "interpretation" of this honourable life; which "they" make to consist in implicitly obeying the dictates of fashionable, "we" of substantial honour: and how far these are at variance it is not difficult to determine.

But how shall such an inveterate custom as the duel be rooted out? We see that all the restriction of laws human and divine will not produce the desired effect; though the former threatens offenders with severe penalties, and the latter forbids anger, malice, revenge, and murder in the strongest terms: but the one is apt to relax too much from the spirit of its own edicts; while the punishments of the other (though of certain accomplishment in due time) are for the present invisible and unfelt, and therefore more liable to meet with neglect. Besides, as the present notions of honour set themselves above all law, and fashionable ignominy is sure to follow a due observance of law, it is to be feared that the sword of justice will never be able to parry the thrusts of the sword of honour; it will therefore threaten in vain. Since honour also is held more precious than life, it seems absurd to make death the punishment of duelling; as its terrors must be held inferior to those of affrighted honour. Banishment from court and being incapacitated from filling any offices military or civil was proposed by Sir Francis Bacon, and seems a plausible and efficacious mode of suppressing its frequency, provided the execution of the sentence could be rendered unequivocal and strictly impartial. The duration of this kind of punishment might be limited or extended according to the nature or repetition of the offence. It has been hinted, that promises might be exacted from officers on the receipt of their commissions, by which they should bind themselves never to fight a premeditated duel; and did they once make such a promise on their honour, there is no doubt but it would be conscientiously observed. What gave stability and energy at the time to the edict of Lewis XIV. was not only his own strict adherence to it, but the voluntary combination of so many of his principal nobility and gentry to renounce the practice of the duel; this was a fasthold of their honour and worked beyond all threats of laws. This mode remains open at present, and has never been attempted in this country; and
such

such a solemn renunciation by the most respectable characters “must” have wonderful effects. There might be difficulties in erecting a court-martial into a court of honour also; but surely they are not insuperable; and it might be done in such a manner, as to render its judgments decisive towards a public restoration [1] of that honour, of which a man might think himself deprived by the insinuations of another:—this is more than is done by the duel, which decides nothing in truth or justice. The regulations (see Cockburne on Duelling, p. 426.) of the mareschals of France, assembled by order of Lewis XIV. “for settling the several satisfactions and reparations on the point of honour,” might serve as a foundation to build upon, to amend, to alter, as might seem desirable.

But after all, the most ready and effectual way of getting rid of the duel (as of all other evils) would be by preventing its causes, and thus rendering it inglorious and ignominious in itself. Now these causes can no otherwise fall to the ground, but by an enlargement or alteration of the present principles of honour, so as to comprehend all moral and religious, as well as polite and fashionable obligation. Were this once effected, no premeditated duel in cold blood could ever be fought. But these juster principles of honour can alone be gradually and effectually introduced into the circles of fashion, under the protection and patronage of men of distinguished bravery, as well as probity and

[1] A command from the king (we know) “now” stops all apprehensions of a duel without detriment to the honour of either party. Why should not an obedience to the laws, a decision of a court of honour, or any other “determined” mode, do the same? It was deemed by the mareschals of France an honourable refusal of a challenge to reply to the following purpose. If he were one of the gentlemen, who had solemnly renounced duelling, he was to answer his challenger—“that he was much surpris’d, that knowing the last edicts of the king, and particularly the declaration of many gentlemen, by which he among the rest had publicly engaged himself never to fight a duel, his challenger would not rest satisfied with the acknowledgement he had made him; and that he does not consider, that he neither can nor ought to assign or accept of any place for fighting, nor even to signify the place, where he might rencounter him:—but that he will alter nothing in his ordinary way of living.” And in general all other gentlemen were to answer—“that if they be set upon, they will defend themselves; but they do not think, that their honour obliges them to fight in cold blood, and so expressly transgress his majesty’s edicts, the laws of religion, and their own consciences.”

discernment. Could those, who have fought the battles of their king and country with uncommon intrepidity and valour, ever fall under the imputation of cowardice or want of manly spirit, on setting their faces against the duel? It is such characters, and perhaps such alone, who can discourage it by their own example and bring it into disrepute. From the ideas of military men on the subject of personal affronts all other ranks of gentlemen will adopt theirs; and though it is not so clear, why military notions of honour should ever have been introduced into the habits of civil life, yet having once found their way from the camp into social and peaceful intercourse, in the army alone must a reform originate [κ]. It is well known, that a soldier, in consequence of his profession, is more nice and scrupulous in his point of honour, than one of any other order or rank of gentry; and there is just cause, since the ardour of glory is so intimately connected with the apprehension of disgrace. But with all deference be it spoken to the highest merits of the military order, a soldier cannot forget, that in this land of freedom, he has another character also to support before his fame is complete, which is that of a good private citizen; and that the highest military command in the kingdom does not exempt its possessor from a submission to the "majesty of law." As an obedient citizen then, how can he patronise a custom, which the law explicitly forbids? as a man of honour, how can he bestow marks of his approbation, on what in his conscience perhaps he utterly reprobates?

What might be the most effectual method of discountenancing the duel among military men, must be left to the experience and judgment of the cool, considerate, and virtuous part of them to determine: but that a practice, so inconsistent with every social, moral, and religious obligation, "ought" to be

[κ] In conjunction with the efforts of the army, "the frowns of the ladies" might have much influence in this business. For though it is not meant to oppose the sentiment, that "none but the brave deserve the fair"—yet if the fair could be prevailed on to esteem it no mark of true bravery in their admirers to fight duels, it would at least have a wonderful effect on many mock heroes, who seek to ingratiate themselves into their favour by no other proof of a brave and manly spirit.

A courtier being once asked, why he had condescended to accept a challenge from one, who was esteemed a paltry fellow, answered; "I could easily have excused myself for not fighting him to my own sex; but how should I have looked the maids of honour in the face in the evening?"

discountenanced, can scarce admit of a doubt. The dark ages of chivalry, ignorance, and slavery are long since past—let us not continue one of their most barbarous usages: the sun of science and improvement has shone brightly upon us—let us profit by the splendor of its rays: we boast the spirit of freedom—let it be conspicuous in a determined and steady opposition to a sanguinary practice, which deals about wounds and bloodshed, destruction and murder,—and that frequently on the most trifling and frivolous pretences.

END OF TREATISE ON DUELLING.

A
T R E A T I S E
O N
G A M I N G.

Periculosa plenum opus Aleæ

Tracto.

HOR.

————— *Simplexne furor sestertia centum*

Perdere?

JUV.

It is possible, that a wife and good man may be prevailed on to game; but it is impossible, that a professed gamester can be a wife and good man.

LAVATER's Aphorisms on Man.

A
T R E A T I S E
O N
G A M I N G.

C H A P. I.

SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE NATURE OF PLAY AND ITS EVIL
CONSEQUENCES; IN PARTICULAR AS PRODUCTIVE OF SO MUCH SUICIDE.

C O N T E N T S.

Gaming, as a most frequent source of suicide, naturally connected with that subject.—

The folly and guilt of gambling universally acknowledged; often the last stage and completion of a vicious character.—Summary of what is to be attempted in the following remarks.—Definition of Play; ancient and modern meaning of the word.—Its abuse to be condemned, but not its use.—Inquiry into the nature of play with respect to sensual or intellectual pleasures; is found to have nothing to do with either.—Equally pursued in childhood and old age, and never cloyed.—Its principal sources are placed in love of gain or pride of conquest; but not easy to assign one comprehensive cause or origin of so universal a passion.—Its prevalence however amid the polite circle (whom all others are fond to imitate) may be assigned to the force of indolent and pleasurable habits, and its progressive excess to the pressures of interest and hopes of gain, in order to support luxurious modes of living.—All ra-

tional and improving conversation made to yield to the introduction of cards.—A brief description of the general evil consequences of gambling.

THE excess of gaming being productive of so much actual suicide, there needs no apology for an introduction of the former subject in a full discussion of the latter: and a cause giving frequent birth to such dreadful effects must needs deserve to be exposed and reprobated in every shape. Indeed there seems never to have been two opinions concerning the sinfulness of the deep gamester's conduct; since no one pretends to defend the principles of gambling, though such numbers fall martyrs to its practice. There is no occasion therefore to enter into a train of argument or reasoning to prove it to be an heinous crime; and indeed almost as little to display its dreadful effects on every interest of its wretched votary; since daily experience so pointedly confirms the truth of whatever can be advanced against its practice. But as few in comparison become desperately attached to the gaming-table, who have not previously run through the whole circle of folly and vice, which so usually and in such various shapes hither tends and herein concentrates, it may be allowable to engage in a somewhat larger field of discussion, and occasionally to introduce a mention of such other prevailing customs, follies, and vices, as have a manifest tendency to terminate in all the horrors of gambling iniquity and gambling kinds of death. For gambling being a vice of such utter destruction through life, and also so frequently the cause of a shameful death itself, every approach towards it should be carefully guarded, and all its deceitful mazes, its windings and turnings be laid open and exposed to our utmost censure and detestation. The life of a gamester generally terminates either in the duel or in self-murder; hence the connexion of this triple-headed Cerberus, which

—————fame rabidâ tria guttura pandit,

to devour the offspring of reason and virtue. A brief account however shall precede relative to the origin, progress, and universality of gaming, which may serve to enliven and relieve both writer and reader from the gloom of those black ideas, which must accompany too close an attention to its various scenes of horror.

The word "Play or Game" in its most comprehensive signification means any thing, which either by words or actions tends to recreate the mind and refresh the spirits, without further view or design than such recreation [A] or refreshment. Now every man's experience tells him, that recreation or refreshment, that is, some sort of play or other, is as necessary after long and extraordinary exertions of the mental powers, as rest is after hard labour, or ease after excessive and long continued pain. It would therefore be too cynical and favouring of moroseness to assert, that it is below the dignity of a rational being to follow such diversions only as are merely innocent, and have nothing useful or improving to recommend them; since being granted innocent, to unbend the mind (which would lose all its vigour and elasticity by being always on the stretch) is their use, and to render it the more fit for future service, is their improvement. Some relaxation therefore or play in the comprehensive sense of the word is undoubtedly necessary; and it has been compared to pauses and rests in music, whose intervals (like those from labour) only serve to strengthen the powers of returning harmony.

But as there are many [B] terms in the arts and sciences, which have outgrown (as it were) their original import, by comprehending a great deal more under them than their etymology will justify; so on the contrary the word "Play" seems to have lost much of its ancient comprehensiveness, so as to become considerably contracted in its present meaning. For now it is usually applied either only to the sports of children, who are said to be fond of play; or to those rational (when well managed) amusements of the stage emphatically styled "Plays;" or to a species of diversion, in which cards, dice, or any other implements of fashionable traffic are introduced. This last is a distinguished use of the word play in modern days, and indeed well nigh threatens the exclu-

[A] "Playe according to the awncient schoolemen (who weare the narrowest examiners and subtlest dystinguyshers of wordes) ys defined to bee—*Ludus*, id est, *locutio vel operatio*, in quo nihil quæritur nisi delectatio animalis:—a spending of the tyme eyther in speech or action, whose only end ys a delight of the mind or speryt. And therefore they call yt also a remedy against the overburthening and dulling of the speryts."—HARRINGTON's Treatise on Playe, published in *Nugæ Antiquæ*.

The Greek general word for Playing is expressive—*παιζειν*—*ludere*, id est, *pueriliter*, like a child—without other meaning than as children do, for present recreation.

[B] Such among many others are the terms hydrostatics, geography, geometry, electricity, &c.

sion of all the rest. Such an one “plays much” is not now spoken of him, as of a mere idler, or one who spends his whole time in a variety of amusements, without ever employing his mind on graver and weightier matters; but of one, who, confining himself to a single species of recreation, which he pursues with unremitted attention and industry, perverts in reality the true meaning of the word, makes a pain of a pleasure, a toil of a diversion, and thus turns an innocent relaxation into a destroyer of time, a waster (instead of refresher) of the spirits, a black and odious vice. To “play high or deep” signifies also not merely to “play much” as to time or quantity of play, but largely as to quality, so as to hazard great property, to ruin fortunes, and to bring whole families to poverty and wretchedness. But all play, according to the present sense of the word, is not necessarily hurtful or of vicious tendency. It would be an ill omen of success to set out with absolutely decrying such a favoured diversion, with wishing to exclude every species or degree of it; since it is to be placed in itself amid the things “indifferent,” which may be applied to good or evil purposes. To refresh the spirits is the true end and design of all play; and though cards or dice are not absolutely necessary for this purpose (there being such a variety of other recreations) yet they may take their turn at least with other amusements: it is not their use, but abuse [c] that is to be reprehended. But when the recreation becomes a business, when that business, by tending to suppress every liberal sentiment and generous feeling, and by exciting every violent and ugly passion, ceases to be innocent; when these passions break forth into vicious excesses, and so often terminate in bloodshed and murder; when time is destroyed, manners infected, youth corrupted, fortunes dissipated, and families ruined; then it must be affirmed, that “Gaming (however patronised “ by those in the highest stations) is an odious and detestable vice.”

But what are the delights of play when followed to excess, and under what class of passions can its inordinate pursuit be ranked? It has nothing to do with sensual appetites; since not only the luxuries and delicacies of the table, the zest of generous wine, the fair beauty of woman, are neglected in behalf of the more favourite die; but the gamester puts by the common feelings of human nature, attends not to the cravings of hunger and thirst, and denies his wearied spirits the refreshment of sleep. Still less has gambling any claim on intellectual

[c] *Nec lussisse pudet, sed non incidere ludum.*——HOR.

enjoyment; since it absorbs the soul in the lowest pursuits and leaves no room for mental accomplishments. What has anxiety, discontent, despair, rage, execrations, and blasphemies (the usual attendants on much gambling) to do with the pleasures either of body or mind? Yet no stage of man's existence here, no difference of sex exempts from its dominion; but its impressions exert their malign influence over the male and female breast, and are visible from the earliest to the latest period of life. Neither does its pursuit (as is usual with other species of recreations) pall and tire through frequent repetition; but its avidity grows with its fruition; it sticks close like ivy on the wall, and its dropical thirst increases with drinking.

As indolence and want of employment is an undoubted source of much play, so all its pleasures (if they are so to be called) or anxieties are ascribable either to the hope of gain or to the pride of conquest. In games of mere chance there can be little but the hope of gain (though some may be fond of being thought the favourites of fortune or chance); in games of skill there may be a share of pride in overcoming independent of gain. But this pride seldom wholly influences the player; since whatever superiority of skill, memory, or judgment may be necessary, it is seldom strenuously exerted, unless a stake or reward is annexed as the fruit of victory. All "excess" of play therefore may be resolved into a love of gain or a species of avarice. But avarice is of two sorts. It consists either in a sordid and tenacious preservation of what is already in our possession, or in an anxious and covetous pursuit of what belongs to another. It is necessary to make this distinction, because though the former is seldom found without a strong tincture of the latter, yet the latter often exists in opposition to the former; being that part of avarice alone which is strictly applicable to the gamester's character. The penurious man naturally fond of wealth for its own sake, and immersed in the miserable pursuits of all saving knowledge, is the last person in the world, who will venture his cash on a perilous stake. With fear and trembling does he extract from his hoards, when there is almost a sure prospect of return with usury; but he would think it a mark of egregious folly to trust to an uncertain issue, of downright madness to hazard any thing on the cast of a die. But the spendthrift, who having already disposed of large sums in all the customary paths of profusion and dissipation, and who now finds himself veering towards the point of poverty and ruin, first experiences the love

of gain in gambling through hopes of extricating himself out of surrounding difficulties. These golden dreams gradually increase their influence, till they produce an eagerness in play and a covetousness of our neighbour's property, which bears strong traits of the spirit of avarice. But though many are first drawn in to a love of gambling on covetous principles, as an expected supply of their necessities, yet it is difficult to separate "some" love of gain from the most moderate player; since even in children the stake is coveted far beyond the pleasure of conquest, and among grown persons there are very few, who can keep up an attention to their game for the honour [D] of victory alone. But this desire of winning in moderate players is something very different from mere avarice or the spirit of covetousness. It is rather a sort of traffic or trading for our neighbour's property at an equal hazard of losing our own; and though we may support an equanimity under the loss, yet we are certainly better pleased with the success of our venture. Though it may be difficult then to assign any one general source of the universal passion for gaming, which has existed through all ages and in all nations, yet some account may be given of the reasons of its rise and progress in certain situations. Its prevalence in the circle of high life in polished nations may be ascribed to the powers of indolent and pleasurable intercourse, and its progressive excess in the same to the operations of self-interest: and as an imitation of their superiors pervades all ranks of life, the spirit of gambling in its various modifications descends to the citizen and rustic through the powerful prevalence of example, of dissipation and idleness.

As the supreme taste and elegance of mixed and large companies (and such alone are the delight of the present age) is to "trifle agreeably"—an emptiness and insipidity of conversation must necessarily take place; which would also be speedily exhausted but for the aid of some amusement introduced to prevent a stagnation of intercourse. This grand desideratum is supplied by the spotted card, which has proved so delightful and inexhaustible a refuge from the wretchedness of ennui. Away then with all amiable (but useless) distinctions of head and heart! the former is despoiled of its rational endowments, the latter of its humane affections. Neither wit, nor sense, nor improvement is thrown into the scale; neither judgment, nor goodness, nor virtue, nor benevolence are any longer required, but all is levelled without a thought bestowed on the wisdom

[D] Sine ullo quæstu friget lusus—says some one.

or folly, the private virtues or vices of our card-playing associates. To what purpose would it be to cultivate the art of agreeable or improving conversation, when the most pleasing tales, the most interesting scenes, the liveliest sallies of pure and chaste wit, the most instructive intercourse with the man of travel, the liberal scholar, the polished gentleman, must be cut short in a moment at the appearance of the painted leaf. A suspension of the understanding takes place, and the indiscriminate use of cards may be deemed a stratagem of the ignorant and shallow to raise themselves on a level with the rational and wise. It discovers indeed a sad dearth of sense, a meagre famine in the land of rational ideas, when the mind can feed with avidity and for a length of time on such light and frothy diet.—Yet from the force of custom, a partial compliance with this species of amusement is scarce to be refused; it is become almost necessary to be expert in such games, as are called in as auxiliaries against languor and insipidity: and both innocent and agreeable is such a compliance, as long as due attention is paid to the quantity of time spent and stake hazarded.—Such then is the rise of play in the fashionable circle; but its progress and excess may be derived from a different source.

Wild is the extravagance of the present age and enormous the expence of gaiety and splendour. What then can so naturally create a lust of gold, as the ambition of being able to equal or excel others in the glitter of magnificence and sumptuous show. Hence rapacity becomes the offspring of extravagance, and the covetous spirit of gain insensibly glides into the soul. Hence the indigent man of fashion (whose vices those of inferior rank are eager to imitate) seeks to satisfy his unbounded expences by this new species of commerce, and seriously applies himself to gaming as to a trade of profit, by which he flatters himself he shall be able to support the vanity of show. As polite habits therefore are the foundation, so are notions of self-interest (however false) the supporting pillars of the house of gambling. But as the foundation is shallow and the pillars are tottering, the superstructure must fall to the ground, and those who trusted to its strength and support will be buried in its ruins.

But if this account of the matter be deemed superficial and unsatisfactory, we need not be so solicitous to point out the cause or origin of gaming, as to display its pernicious effects. For however difficult it may be comprehensively to ascer-

tain, whence the universal love of gaming springs, yet it is easy enough to see whither it [E] tends. No one can hesitate to style the spirit of gambling, the exciter of many a violent agitation of body and mind, of many a perturbed and corrosive passion; that it consumes a large portion of irredeemable time; that it infects and poisons all amiable and virtuous manners, and corrupts and spoils our noblest youth; that it dissipates their finances and wastes their health; that it is productive of violence, disputes, and frequent duels; and finally leads to despair and suicide. But though excessive gaming is universally acknowledged to be scandalous in its motive, foul in its management, and dreadful in its effects; yet who will listen to the voice of admonition crying—"Woe to the followers of such deadly practices?"

C H A P. II.

HISTORICAL PROOFS OF GAMING BEING AN UNIVERSAL PASSION;—EQUALLY THE PURSUIT OF BARBAROUS AND ENLIGHTENED NATIONS, AND THE FOIBLE OR VICE ALIKE OF GREAT AND LITTLE MINDS.

C O N T E N T S.

Gaming an universal passion through all nations.—Gaming among Asiatic nations:—dice and cockfighting; and among Chinese, cards.—Eastern gamblers stake their wives, children, and own personal liberty, on a cast of the die.—Gaming in Ceylon; in Sumatra; in Malacca; lock of hair let down in desperation by Malaysians, and its consequences.—Gaming in Siam; in Tonquin; in China; in Japan; in Sandwich Islands; in Greenland; among Canadians and all American Indians; among African Savages.—The gambling passion falsely ascribed to climate, because universal: rather springs from indolence joined to a love of gain, and a desire of victory even in matters of chance.—Ancient Persians addicted to

[E] Causa latet, vis est notissima.—OVID.

gaming.—Anecdote of Queen Parysatis, and the use she made of dice.—The modern Persians being Mahometans expressly restrained from gaming by their koran, but find some evasions.—The Turks confine themselves to drafts and chess.—Ancient Egyptians were gamesters.—Athenian and Grecian gambling.—Aristotle ranks gamesters with thieves.—Alexander's censure on his gambling courtiers.—Roman gaming.—Augustus a great gamester; and Claudius.—The humorous punishment assigned to Claudius in the shades below on account of his gambling propensity.—Justinian's punishment of gamesters.—Theodoric's gaming.—Ancient Germans great gamesters; and also modern Germans.—Dice-playing warmly censured by the fathers, by edicts, and councils in the early ages of the church; which shows its universal practice in Europe.—Henry IV. of France, a great gamester, and also Lewis XIV.—French gaming.—Marshal Belleisle's endeavours to check its progress among officers.—Spanish gaming.—English gaming briefly mentioned here.—Desperate effects of gaming similar in savage and enlightened countries.—Reflections.

IT was asserted in general in the last chapter, that gaming was an universal passion. In this its prevalence in ancient and modern times shall be briefly traced; and it shall be shown to be equally the pursuit of barbarous and enlightened nations, as well as the foible and vice alike of great and little minds. If these historic researches be taken up in the Asiatic world, a wonderful propensity will be found among the natives of the East towards an excess of gambling, which [F] is also restrained by severe laws. Dice and that little pugnacious

[F] The following note is taken from Halhed's Code of Gentoo Laws.—“Of Gaming,” Chap. XXI. Sect. i.

“Gaming is of two sorts, the first, “Choperbazie,” a game played with three long dice, chess or tables and dice, and such other kind of games, which are called “Dote.” The second is, when persons cause elephants to fight with elephants, bulls with bulls, cocks with cocks, nightingales with nightingales, or any other animals in the same manner; the name of this is “Shemabhee.” These two sorts of gaming, with a conditional wager of stipulation, are not allowed to any persons even in jest. If any man, either openly or secretly, plays with another, at either of these two sorts of gaming above specified, upon a stipulated wager, the magistrate shall fine that man in any sum that he chooses, and shall chastise him.

“If any man has a propensity to either of these two sorts of gaming, in that case he shall play before the magistrate, or shall cause a man belonging to the magistrate, to sit there while he plays; in these two cases, whoever is the loser shall pay the money, which was the condition of the game.

“If

cious bird, the cock, are the chief instruments employed by the numerous nations of the East to agitate their minds and ruin their fortunes; to which the Chinese (who are desperate gamesters) add the use of cards with which they are [G] well acquainted. When all other property is played away, the Asiatic gambler scruples not to stake his wife, his child on the cast of a die, or courage and strength of a martial bird. If still unsuccessful, the last venture he makes is that of his limbs, his life, or own personal liberty, which he hazards on the caprice of chance, and agrees to lie at the mercy or to become the slave of his fortunate antagonist.

“ If any man without leave of the magistrate should play for a stipulated wager, in that case the conqueror in the game shall not receive the money played for, but the magistrate shall fine both parties.

“ When a game is to be played for a wager, it shall be played in the presence of a number of people.

“ When a man, having gamed with another for a wager, receives the money played for, he shall give that money to the magistrate's officer; the magistrate's officer shall divide that money, and give half to the person and half to the magistrate.

“ If a man to procure himself to be winner in a game, either by numbering the squares of the chess-table, or by numbering the cowries of the game, or by any other method, is guilty of artifice and collusive practice, the magistrate shall fine him according to his abilities.

“ Whoever plays without any stipulated condition or wager shall not receive any money upon the game.

“ If a man plays at these two sorts of games with any deceit or fraud, the magistrate shall cut off two of his fingers.

“ If a man having played at any game for a stake, and upon winning having received the money, doth not give to the magistrate the share that is appointed him, then the magistrate shall fine him.”

[G] “ I have authority in my own possession for saying, that the Chinese use cards, marked and sorted in suits, like those of Europe—not only from a Chinese painting, where their ladies are represented playing at a game with something much thicker in substance than cards, but shaped and numbered like them. The substance is white. Quære, if those cards are the “ wooden cards” mentioned by Osbeck in his voyage to China, II. 247?—Le Compte (299) speaks of the Chinese hazarding their estates, houses, children, and wives on a “ card.”—I have also a pack of Chinese cards made of the same materials, as European, and charged with various devices to no great or regular numbers. The whole pack consists only of thirty cards, and of these, nine have human faces, one, whole length figures, and one, two faces one under the other. The whole length figure has on it a red stamp with characters. There are two such stamps on one of the faces.”—Observations on Cards by Mr. Gough in *Archæologia*, Vol. VIII. 1787.

In the island of Ceylon cock-fighting is carried to a great height; much property is won and lost, and the privilege of exercising this "humane" calling is farmed out by the governors of the place. The Sumatrans [H] are addicted to the use of dice through all ranks of the inhabitants, notwithstanding the penalties are severe against gambling. A strong spirit of play is a striking trait in the character of a [I] Malayan. He hazards every thing that is dear to him on the cast of a die or battle of a cock; and at length resigns his possessions, his person, his liberty, to the will and pleasure of the winner. However the Malayan gamester does not always tamely submit to this last stroke of fortune; but when reduced to a state of desperation by repeated ill-luck, he loosens a certain lock of hair, which his countrymen preserve with a superstitious reverence, and which, when tied up, is an emblem of peace and tranquillity; when flowing down, of war and destruction to all they meet. He next swallows opium or some intoxicating liquor, till he works himself up into a fit of phrensy, and begins to bite and kill every thing that comes in his way. But as soon as ever this lock is seen flowing, it is lawful to fire at the person and to destroy him as fast as possible, he being considered no better than a mad dog.

In the kingdom of Siam [K] cock-fighting much prevails, and also games with dice in the tables; and to discharge their gambling debts the Siamese sell their

[H] "Throughout every rank of the people in Sumatra there prevails a strong spirit of gaming. A common species of gambling is with dice; but these throughout the pepper districts are rigorously forbidden; because gaming with them is not only the child, but the parent of idleness, and by the event of play whole villages are often thrown into confusion. All gaming (except cock-fighting at stated periods) is absolutely prohibited. The fine for each offence is fifty dollars. The person, in whose house it is carried on, is fined equally with the gamester. One half of the fine goes to the informer; the other is distributed among the industrious planters at the yearly payment of the customs."—MARDEN'S Hist. Sumatra.

[I] "The Malaysans are great lovers of cock-fighting."—DAMPIER'S Voyages, Vol. II. 184.

"An immoderate love of play is evidently a striking feature in the character of the Malaysans; nay to such excesses do they carry it, that they venture their liberties and every thing that is dear to them, on the cast of the die. He that loses, voluntarily becomes the slave of the winner. First goes the property, next the wife and children, and lastly the wretch himself."—Philosophical Rhapsodies, by R. J. Sullivan, Esq; Vol. I. 247.

[K] "The Siamese love cock-fighting. But as it almost always costs the life of one of the cocks, the king of Siam prohibited these kinds of duels; because the Talapoins (priests) say—that the owners

of.

their possessions, families, and at length themselves for slaves. The Tonquinese also fall into this prevailing vice, which pervades all orders of men among them; neither do they scruple to strip and deposit their clothes by way of bet [L] or security. The Chinese are most eager gamblers, playing night and day till they have lost all they are worth, and then they usually go and [M] hang

of the cocks will for their punishment be bastinadoed in the other world with bars of iron.—The Siamese love gaming to such an excess, as to ruin themselves and lose their liberty or that of their children; for in this country, whoever has not wherewith to satisfy his creditor, sells his children to discharge the debt; and if this satisfy not, he himself becomes a slave. The play which they love best is Tick-tack (a game played in the tables with dice) which they call Saca; and which they have learned from the Portuguese; for they play it like them and us. They play not at cards, and their other hazardous sports I know not; but they play at chess like the Chinese.”—LOUBERE’S Hist. of Siam, P. II.

[L] “The Tonquinese have one great fault extremely common among them, which is that of gaming. To this they are so universally addicted, servants and all, that neither the awe of their masters nor any thing else, is sufficient to restrain them, till they have lost all they have, even their very clothes. This is a reigning vice among the eastern nations.”—DAMPIER’S Voyages, Vol. II. C. iii.

“Cock-fighting is a mighty game amongst the Tonquinese; so that it is become a princely sport and much in fashion with courtiers. They lose much that lay against the general; for right or wrong he must and will win, whereby he impoverishes his grantees, so that they are not able to undertake any thing against him.”—Description of Tonquin by S. Baron, a native, written in 1685: for which see Collection of Voyages and Travels, folio, Vol. VI. P. 14. 1732.

[M] “The Chinese are very great gamblers, and they are never tired of it, playing night and day till they have lost all their estates; then it is usual with them to hang themselves. This was frequently done by Chinese factors at Manila, as I was told by Spaniards who lived there. The Spaniards themselves are much addicted to gaming, and are very expert at it; but the Chinese are too subtil for them, being in general a very cunning people.”—DAMPIER’S Voyages, Vol. I. C. 15.

“The Chinese I found settled at Tonquin were no less given to gaming than those I met with elsewhere. For after they have lost their money, goods, and clothes, they will stake down their wives and children; and lastly will play upon tick, and as the dearest thing they have, will mortgage their “hair” upon honour; and whatever it cost them will be sure to redeem it. For a free Chinese (as those are living at Tonquin, who have fled from the Tartars) would be as much ashamed of short hair, as a Tonquinese is of white teeth.”—DAMPIER’S Voyages, Vol. II. C. iii.

“Quail-fighting (for these birds are as pugnacious as cocks) is at this day a common diversion at the entertainments of great persons in China, as likewise in the way of laying bets, and gaming.”—BELL’S Travels, as quoted by Pegge on Cock-fighting in Archæologia, Vol. III. 1775.

“The Chinese are ingenious in playing at any game, as cards, chess (which they call ke), dice, tables, a sport like fox and geese, and the like. But what ruins them is their Metna at the new year, which is even and odd, guessing at little heaps of money, &c.”—CARERI’S China in Coll. Voyages, &c. Vol. IV. 354.

themselves. The severity of the laws against gaming in Japan sufficiently points out the propensity of the inhabitants towards it. "Whoever ventures his money at play is put to death." (Montesquieu, *Spirit of Laws*, B. VI. C. xiii.) The same high spirit of gambling exists also in the newly-discovered isles in the Pacific Ocean, where the inhabitant was found to venture, what he must needs hold most dear, the possession of an "iron hatchet," on the event of [N] a running match.

If we next turn our course northwards, and penetrate through those mountains of ice, which stopped the progress of the [o] English adventurers, it will appear that driven snow cannot effectually quench the flames of gambling, which glow amid the regions of the frozen [p] pole. If we descend from thence into the western hemisphere, the agitations of gambling passions, and a particular partiality for games of chance, form a distinguishing feature in the cha-

[N] "The Sandwich Islanders are greatly addicted to gambling. One of their games resembles our game of drafts; but from the number of squares it seems to be more intricate. The board is of the length of about two feet, and is divided into two hundred and thirty-eight squares, fourteen in a row. In this game they use black and white pebbles, which they move from one square to another. Another game consists in concealing a stone under some cloth, which is spread out by one of the parties, and rumpled in such a manner, that it is difficult to distinguish where the stone lies. The antagonist then strikes with a stick that part of the cloth, where he supposes the stone to be, and the chances being upon the whole against his hitting it, odds of all degrees, varying with the opinion of the dexterity of the parties, are laid upon the occasion. Their manner of playing at bowls nearly resembles ours. They often entertain themselves with races between boys and girls, on which occasions they lay wagers with great spirit. We saw a man beating his breast and tearing his hair in the violence of rage, for having lost "three hatchets" at one of these races, which he had purchased from us with near half his property a very little time before."—*Manners of Sandwich Islanders in Captain Cook's last Voyage.*

[o] Captain Cook and his comrades.

[p] "The Greenlanders gamble with a board, which has a finger-piece upon it, turning round on an axle; and the person, to whom the finger points on the stopping of the board (which is whirled round), sweeps all the stakes that have been deposited."—*CRANTZ Hist. of Greenland.*

Horrebow indeed seems to exempt the Icelanders from being much addicted to gaming. "It cannot be alledged (says he in his *Hist. of Iceland*) as matter of fact, that the Icelanders are lovers of gaming. It is true they divert themselves a little at chess, as also at cards; but more especially the former, in which they are very expert, though not such great masters of it, as their forefathers probably were. Mr. Anderson says, they apply themselves very much to chess, and as well as their ancestors are very famous for it."

rafter of the Canadian Indian, and of all the rude natives of the American [Q] continent. Thefe likewise, as well as the natives of the Eaft, will lofe their arms,

[Q] "The infatuating fpirit of gaming is not confined to Europe: the American Indians alfo feel the bewitching impulfe, and often lofe their arms, their apparel, and every thing they are poffeffed of. In this cafe however they do not follow the example of more refined gamefters; for they neither murmur nor repine; not a fretful word efcape them, but they bear the frowns of fortune with a philofophic compofure."—CARVER'S Travels through interior Parts of North America.

"Among other games the Indians have one called the game of the bowl or platter, played between two perfons only. Each perfon has fix or eight little bones of a quadrangular form, two fides of which are coloured black and two white. Thefe they throw up into the air, from whence they fall into a bowl or platter underneath and made to fpin round. He that happens to have the greateft number of thefe bones turn up of a fimilar colour, counts five points, and forty is the game. The winning party keeps his place and the lofer yields his to another: a whole village is fometimes concerned in the party, and at times one band plays againft another. During this play the Indians appear to be greatly agitated, and at every decifive throw fet up an hideous fhout. They make a thoufand contortions, addreffing themfelves at the fame time to the bones, and loading with imprecations the evil fpirits that affift their fuccefsful antagonifts. At this game fome will lofe their apparel, all the moveables of their cabbins, and fometimes even their liberty, notwithstanding there are no people in the univerfe more jealous of the latter than the Indians are."—CARVER'S Travels. (N. B. This feems a little to contradict the philofophic compofure mentioned above.)

"An immoderate love of play, efpecially at games of hazard, which feems to be natural to all people unaccuftomed to the occupations of regular hiftory, is univerfal among the Americans. The fame caufes, which fo often prompt perfons at their cafe in civilized life to have recourfe to this paff-time, render it the delight of the favage. The former are independent of labour; the latter do not feel the neceffity of it; and as both are unemployed, they run with tranfport to whatever is of power to ftir and agitate their minds. Hence the Americans, who are at other times fo indifferent, fo phlegmatic, fo filent, and fo difinterefted, as foon as they engage in play, become rapacious, impatient, noify, and almoft frantic with eagernefs. Their furs, their domeftic utensils, their clothes, their arms are flaked at the gaming table; and when all is loft, high as their fense of independence is, in a wild emotion of defpair or of hope, they will often risk their own perfonal liberty upon a fingle caft. Among feveral tribes fuch gaming parties frequently recur, and become their moft acceptable entertainment at every great feftival. Superftition, which is apt to take hold of thofe paffions, which are moft vigorous, frequently lends its aid to confirm and ftrengthen this favourite inclination. Their conjurers are accuftomed to prefcribe a folemn match at play, as one of the moft efficacious methods of appeafing their gods, or of reftoring the fick to health."—ROBERTSON'S Hift. of America, Vol. I. 395, 4to. and writers quoted by him.

"Besides their neceffary occupations the favages have others, which are recreative, as games of chance. The game of chance the moft ufed among the favages is one with little bones. They are twice as big as a cherry-ftone, and made in an oval or elliptical fhape. Though fix fides can be diftinguifhed, they have properly but two larger than the others, which being a little flattened makes them

arms, their apparel, and at length stake their liberty on games of chance. If we cross the Atlantic Ocean, and land on African shores, report ascribes the same

them stand firmer. One of the sides is black, the other a yellowish white. There are no fixed number of bones in the game. One more or less can be used as the players choose, but they in general use no more than six or eight. They fling these bones into a wooden bowl very smooth inside and outside, and very much like the bowls used on board a ship. They shake these bones for a long while in the bowl, and then knock it upon the ground, that the bones may bound up. They also at the same time whirl the bowl round and help the motion of the bones by moving their hands, that they may turn upon the side they wish. Sometimes without using the bowl, they only fling up the bones, which fall upon a nice skin stretched upon the ground, or a fine mat. But only the women play so, and the bones are rather larger than the others. Though there are but two sides black and white, there may happen however many little accidents, which will render the game very agreeable. The savages are as eager after this game, as the keenest gamblers are among us. Whole villages play against one another, and sometimes several villages assemble together to play a game. Before they begin, the skins, earthen ware, and every thing that is precious, are laid out ready for the conqueror. It is not uncommon to see these things amounting all together to two thousand crowns. I have read somewhere, that there are sometimes many, who not only lose all that they have, but who even withdraw naked in the middle of winter, and often engage their liberty for some time. But before they play, they never neglect any superstitious customs, which they think may make them lucky, and several prepare themselves for the game by several days fast. It is very entertaining to see them play, so animated and eager do they seem to be. Though there are but two, who hold the bowl for the two parties, they seem however all to play together; for though the first only shake them and fling them up, yet the others follow all their motions with the greatest attention. While one of the players shakes the bowl, those who bet, hollow out all together, repeating several times, what colour, and what side, they wish for. They pronounce their words with such a surprizing vivacity and volubility, that they very often cannot be understood. In the mean while they give themselves such blows, and put themselves into so much motion, that though they are half-naked, they are in as much heat, as if they had taken the most violent exercise.—There is another game of chance among the savages, which is also a game of dexterity, called the game of straws, or of reeds, which are white and not thicker than straws, and about ten inches long. Mr. Boucher, who lived a long while in America, speaks of this in his History of Canada. “This game of straws (says he) is played with small reeds made on purpose, which are divided by chance into three unequal parts; but we are not acquainted with it yet; it seems to be a very ingenious game, and those reeds among them are the same as cards with us.”—The Baron de Hontan also speaks of this game as an ingenious one, where calculation is required; for he, who can add, subtract, divide, and multiply with care, will always be sure to win. Practice therefore is necessary, and the savages are very good calculators, their arithmetic being very clear and intelligible. Monsieur Perrot, a celebrated traveller, gives a description of this game, but in a very obscure manner. Nobody has been able to give me an explanation of this game; all that I can say is, that after having divided these straws, they pass them in their hands very fast; they reckon an odd number lucky, and the number “nine” superior to all others: that the wagers increase or diminish according to the appearance of the game, and sometimes they are so eager, when villages play

same propensities to the wild inhabitants of those [R] burning regions. Some seem desirous of ascribing this gambling passion to the effects of climate; but without much show of reason; since it is found to exist alike among the natives of the frigid [s] and torrid zones, and to be no less prevalent in the tracts of mildness

against one another, that the game lasts for two or three days. Though they seem very honest and quiet, there is however a good deal of cheating; for the savages are very dexterous and light-fingered, and though it is very difficult to cheat in the game of little bones, on account of there being only two colours and their being shaken in an open plate, they can however do it, if they choose. I do not know, if these two games are known any where else but in North America.”—Manners of the American Savages, by LAFITAU, Paris, 1724. Chap. of Games.

[R] “The African negroes have a game, of which father Labat speaks. “The game they play “(says he) and which they have carried to the islands, is with a kind of dice. They use four small “shells, which are also their coin. They make an hole through the convex side large enough that “the shells may stand on that side, as well as the other. They then shake them in their hands as we “do dice, and then fling them upon the table. If all the holes are uppermost, and the hollow sides “under, the flinger wins; or he who throws the greatest number of one kind, either of the hollow “or convex sides, or an equal number of both, wins.”—LAFITAU, Chap. of Games.

“Cards had formerly seduced him; but an unsuccessful contest at cribbage with a Jew, who won his clothes, had determined him to abjure the propensity, which appears to be innate among his countrymen. A French writer relates, that in the kingdoms of Ardrah, Whydah, and Benin, a negro will stake at play his fortune, his children, and his liberty.”—See Life of Ignatius Sancho, prefixed to his Letters published in 1784.—N. B. This negro, whose talents were so extraordinary, was born on board a ship in the slave trade a few days after it had quitted the coast of Guinea, for the Spanish West Indies. A disease of the new climate put an early period to his mother’s existence; and his father defeated the miseries of slavery by an act of suicide. The infant was baptized at Carthage, and brought into England by his master at two years old. He died in 1780. The abilities and philanthropy of this untutored African met with much respect and notice both in the great and literary world, who overlooked the distinction of narrow minds.

Quamvis ille niger, quamvis tu candidus esses.

VIRG.

[s] “Gaming is a vice that readily insinuates itself into minds naturally averse to the avocations of industry. The thoughts of men are active, and when the sphere is circumscribed, they rush into those channels, which convey them with the most rapidity. Gaming, being in general a sedentary occupation, is more adapted to a “warm climate,” where bodily exertion is in very few instances considered as an amusement.”—MARSDEN’S Hist. of Sumatra.

“I am inclined to think (though of this I am doubtful) that the ruinous and destructive vice of gaming is “less prevalent in warm than in cold climates.” In the former of these, the people are more pleased with what directly produces some positive sensual pleasure, than what pleases merely by interesting the mind, and putting it into a state of agitation. The latter of these would be too robust

mildness and temperature. The universality of the passion (particularly among unenlightened nations) seems to arise out of a want of habitual employment in some material and regular line of conduct; for which something must be substituted to call forth the natural activity of the mind; and this is no way more effectually accomplished in all indolent pursuits, than by those emotions and agitations, which gambling produces.

Having thus traced the love of gaming through the present pagan world, its influence over the polished nations of ancient and modern days shall be ascertained with as much brevity as possible.—That gaming with dice was an usual and fashionable species of diversion at the Persian court in the times of the younger [T] Cyrus (to go no higher) is evident from the anecdote related by some historians of those days concerning queen Parysatis, the mother of Cyrus, who used all her art and skill in gambling to satiate her revenge, and to accom-

an exercise for an hot climate, where any considerable degree of even mental employment is a fatigue; but in northern countries, a machine coarse and heavy finds a pleasure in whatever is apt to rouse and agitate the spirits; such as hunting, travelling, war, and wine: and it will not be denied, that gaming is at least as likely to produce this effect, as any of the foregoing.”——FALCONER’s Remarks on the Influence of Climate on the Dispositions, &c. of Mankind, B. I. C. viii.

“I question, whether the passion for gaming be so universal, as has been imagined. I believe that it is principally prevalent in “cold climates,” where something is requisite to set an heavy, inactive machine in motion.”——FALCONER, Ditto, B. VI. C. i.

“It is not incurious to reflect on this disposition for gaming; nor is it unworthy of attention to observe, how strongly the same propensity operates among all men; with the Malay for instance or the American in his native woods, and with the European surrounded with luxury and refinement. “Indolence and want of employment” are manifestly the causes, which first impel the mind to seek gratification in this inordinate, this ruinous passion. Could a man force himself to industrious applications, the spirit of play would soon evaporate; but some, as among Europeans, are placed above the necessity of labour; and others, as among the Malays and Americans, despise it. Hence “universally” arises that “ennui,” that listlessness, that indifference to every pursuit, but that of chance, when the mind being agitated and every generous feeling of the soul absorbed, the man at length becomes totally involved in all the mazes of uncertainty, in all the heart-rending distractions of apprehension.”——SULLIVAN’s Phil. Rhap. Vol. I. p. 247.

N. B. This last writer gives a much better account of the “universal” passion for gaming (which agrees also with experience) than those, who would ascribe it to any partial effects of climate, which does not agree with experience.

[T] Near four hundred years before the christian era.

plish her bloody-minded projects against the murderers of her favourite son. She played for the life or death of an unfortunate slave [u], who had only executed the commands of his master: thus early were dice made subservient to the purposes of cruelty and murder.

But however the ancient Persians might be addicted to gambling, the modern ones are somewhat restrained from its open practice by [x] the prohibitions of Mahomet, who has strictly forbidden his followers to engage in any games of chance, or to play for money. Yet evasions are found out and exceptions formed in favour of games in the tables, which, as they are only liable to chance in the “throw of the dice,” but totally dependent on “skill” in the management of

[u] The anecdote is as follows. “There only remained for the final execution of queen Parysatis’s project and fully to satiate her vengeance, the punishment of the king’s slave Mefabates, who by his master’s order had cut off the head and hand of the younger Cyrus, who was beloved by Parysatis (their common mother) above Artaxerxes his elder brother and the reigning monarch. But as there was nothing to take hold of in his conduct, the queen laid this snare for him. She was a woman of great address, had abundance of wit, and excelled at playing a certain game with dice. She had been apparently reconciled to the king after Cyrus’s death, and made one in all his parties of pleasure and gambling. One day seeing the king totally unemployed, she proposed playing with him for a thousand darics (about five hundred pounds) to which he readily consented. She suffered him to win and paid down the money. But affecting regret and vexation she pressed him to begin again, and to play with her for a slave. The king, who suspected nothing, complied, and the winner was to choose the slave. The queen was now all attention to the game, and made use of her utmost skill and address, which as easily procured her victory, as her studied neglect before had caused her defeat. She won, and chose Mefabates, who being delivered into her hands was put to the most cruel tortures and death by her command. When the king would have interfered, she only replied with a smile of contempt—“Surely you must be a great loser, to be so much out of temper for giving up a decrepit old slave, when I, who lost a thousand good darics, and paid them down on the spot, do not say a word, and am satisfied.”—PLUTARCH in *Life of Artaxerxes*.

[x] “Gaming is prohibited by the Koran. The word “al meisar” (the lots) which is used, signifies, according to all commentators, all games whatever subject to hazard or chance, as dice, cards, tables, &c. And they are reckoned so ill in themselves, that the testimony of him, who plays at them, is by the more rigid judged to be of no validity in a court of justice. Chess is almost the only game, which the Mohammedan doctors allow to be lawful, because it depends wholly on skill, not chance; but no money is to be played for or betted at it; which last the Turks religiously observe, but the Persians do not. The Mohammedans comply with the prohibition of gaming much better than they do with that of wine; for though the common people among the Turks more frequently, and the Persians more rarely are addicted to play, yet the better sort are seldom guilty of it.”—SALE’S *Koran*, Preliminary Discourse, Sect. 5.

the

the game, cannot (they argue) be meant to be prohibited by their prophet any more than chess, which is universally allowed to his followers: and also to save the difficulty of being forbidden to play for money, they make an alms of their winnings, and on certain occasions distribute them among the poor. This we may suppose is done by the more scrupulous, but no doubt there are numbers, whose consciences do not impede the disposal of their gambling profits in other shapes. However this be, all excess of gaming is absolutely condemned in Persia; and any place, wherein it is much exercised, is called by a most dishonourable and contemptuous appellation, viz. “an habitation of corrupted car-cases [y] or a carrion-house.”—The Turks, who are of a stricter sect, are more scrupulous than the Persians, and admit no lax interpretation of their law. Wherefore their chief domestic amusement consists in the games of drafts or chess, the vicissitudes of which are objects of skill alone:—whilst an incessant rattle of the dice is heard in most christian countries, which though expressly condemned by human laws and forbidden by the spirit of divine ones, is suffered publicly to hurl its thousands into the gulph of destruction.

It is sufficient to determine the existence of any particular vice in a nation, when there are severe laws prohibiting and punishing its practice. Gaming therefore was prevalent in Egypt in early times, since by an old law of that kingdom, “every man was easily admitted to the accusation of a gamester or “dice-player; and if the person was convicted, he was sent to work in [z] “the quarries.”

There is no doubt, how much the spirit of gambling prevailed in Greece, and what an influence it had, joined with other modes of dissipation and corruption, towards subjugating its civil liberties to the power of Macedon. So shamefully were the Athenians addicted to this vice, that they forgot all public spirit in their continued habits of gaming, and entered into convivial associations for the purposes of dicing, at a time when Philip was making one grand throw for their liberties at the battle of Chæronea. This politic monarch well knew

[y] See Hyde De Ludis Orientalibus in his Parts “De tesserarum jactibus,” &c. and “Quatenus alea sit licita?”

[z] See Taylor’s Ductor Dubitantium, B. IV. C. i. on the question, “whether it be lawful to “play at cards or dice?” and the writers he quotes there.

the powers of depravity towards enervating and enslaving the human mind; on which account he encouraged profusion, dissipation, and gambling, as being sure of meeting with little opposition from those, who possessed such characters, in [A] his projects of ambition. Indeed gambling was arrived at such an height in Greece, that Aristotle scruples not to rank gamesters “with thieves and plunderers, who for the sake of gain do not scruple to despoil their [B] best friends:”—and his pupil [C] Alexander set a fine upon some of his courtiers “because he did not perceive they made a sport or pastime of dice, but seemed to be employed as in a most serious business [D].”

To be at much pains in tracing the excess of Roman gambling with dice would be a superfluous business; since the satirists’ accounts of the attractive magic of these little engines of destruction, and of the avidity with which their

[A] See Demosthenes (Mounteney’s) first Olynthiac, and Athenæus, Lib. VI. 260.

[B] Ethic. ad Nicomachum, Lib. IV.

[C] Plutarch in Reg. et Imp. Apophthegmata.

[D] Cock-fighting was also much in vogue in Greece and the adjacent isles. There was an annual festival at Athens called “the Cock-fighting,” instituted by Themistocles at the end of the Persian war on the following occasion. When Themistocles was leading his army against the Persians, he saw some cocks fighting: he attended to them, and stopping his troops said as follows. “These animals fight neither for the gods of their country, nor for the monuments of their ancestors, nor for glory, nor for freedom, nor for their children, but for the sake of victory, and that one may not yield to the other.” And from this topic he inspired the Athenians. After his victorious return, as an act of gratitude for this accidental occasion of inspiring his troops with courage, he instituted the above festival, “that what was an incitement to valour at that time to the Athenians, might be perpetuated as an encouragement to the like bravery hereafter.”—The cock was sacred to Apollo, Mercury, and Æsculapius, on account of his vigilance, and also to Mars, on account of his magnanimous and daring spirit. It should seem then that at first cock-fighting was partly a religious, and partly a political institution at Athens; and was there continued for the purpose of improving the seeds of valour in the minds of their youth: but that it was afterwards abused and perverted, both there and in other parts of Greece, to a common pastime and amusement, and appropriated to the purposes of much gambling, without any moral, political, or religious intention whatever; and as it is now followed and practised amongst us.”—See PEGGE’s Memoirs on Cock-fighting (and the authors he quotes, Ælian, Columella, &c.) in Archæologia, Vol. III. 1775.

The above account is to be found in Ælian Var. Hist. L. II. C. xxviii.

“Let cocks fight publicly in the theatre one day in the year.”—An Attic law, for which see Petiti Leges Atticæ, p. 4.

fickle

fickle determinations were courted, are copious and energetic, and serve to convince every reader both of their general influence [E] and desolating powers. As little does there need any thing, but a bare comparison between those times and the present, to make one sensible, that the decline and downfall of the most distant empires proceeds from the same internal seeds of dissipation and corruption.—The orators [F] also are vehement against the gambling character, when they

[E] ——— Quem præceps alea “nudat.”——HOR. L. I. Ep. xviii.

——— nescit equo rudis
Hære ingenuus puer :
Venarique timet, ludere doctior
Seu Græco jubeas trocho,
Seu malis vetitâ legibus aleâ.——HOR. L. III. Ode xxiv.

Scurra Volaneri, postquam illi iusta podagra
Contudit articulos, qui pro se tolleret atque
Mitteret in phimum talos, mercede diurnâ
Conductum pavit.———HOR. L. II. S. vii.

——— effigies quò
Tot bellatorum, si luditur alea pernox
Ante Numantinos? si dormire incipis ortu
Luciferi———JUV. Sat. viii.

Si damnosa senem juvat alea, ludit et hæres
Bullatus, parvoque eadem movet arma fritillo.——JUV. Sat. xiv.

——— alea turpis,
Turpe et adulterium mediocribus: hæc eadem illi
Omnia cum faciant, hilares nitidique vocantur.——JUV. Sat. xi.

——— alea quando
Hos animos? neque enim “loculis” comitantibus itur
Ad casum tabulæ, positâ sed luditur “arca.”
Prælia quanta illic dispensatore videbis
Armigero! simplexne furor festertia centum
Perdere et horrenti tunicam non reddere servo?——JUV. Sat. i.

——— hunc alea decoquit———PERSIUS, Sat. v.

[F] Cicero describing the worst division of Cataline's associates, and whom he most resembled himself, says, In his gregibus omnes aleatores, omnes adulteri, omnes impuri impudicique versantur.——Orat. ii. in Cat.

they are drawing the picture of a Cataline or an Antony; and the biographers omit not to mention the gambling propensities of the imperial heroes of their tale.

Whilst an Augustus [G] could gamble to what excess he pleased with the wealth of a mighty empire at command; whilst he could defy the numerous laws which forbade the use of dice except during the feast of Saturnalia; while this absolute lord of the world, with a soul adapted to mighty enterprises, could glory in the character of a gamester, and seek the shameful praise of liberality and benevolence, from supplying the gambling necessities of others;—what was

Speaking also of Antony's house he calls it—*Domus aleatoribus referta; suggerebantur etiam sæpe (non enim semper iste felix) damna aleatoria, &c.*—*Orat. Phil. ii.*

The gamester also is made one of Cataline's associates by Sallust. *Omnium flagitiosorum atque facinosorum circum se, tanquam stipatorum, catervas habebat. Nam quicumque impudicus, adulter, ganeo, alea, manu, ventre, pene bona patria laceraverat, quique alienum æs grande conflaverat, &c. &c.*—*Bell. Cat.*

[G] Aleæ rumorem nullo modo expavit Augustus, lusitque simpliciter et palam oblectamenti causâ etiam senex; ac præterquam Decembri mense, aliis quoque festis profestisque diebus. Nec id dubium est autographâ quâdam epistolâ. “Cœnavi (inquit Augustus) mi Tiberi, cum iisdem. Accesserunt convivæ Vinicius et Silvius Pater. Inter cœnam lusimus *γερωνικως* et heri et hodie. Talis enim jactatis, ut quisque Canem vel Senionem miserat, in singulos talos singulos denarios in medium conferebat; quos tollebat universos, qui Venerem jecerat.” (N.B. Canis, Senio, Venus, were different throws upon the Tali.)—Et rursus aliis literis scribit Augustus. “Nos, mi Tiberi, Quinquatriis fatis jucundè egimus. Lusimus enim per omnes dies forumque aleatorium calefecimus. Frater tuus magnis clamoribus rem gessit. Ad summam tamen perdidit non multum; sed ex magnis detrimentis præter spem paulatim retractus est. Ego perdidici viginti millia nummum meo nomine, sed cum effusè in lusu liberalis fuisssem, ut soleo plerumque. Nam si, quas manus remisui cuique, exegisssem, aut retinuissem quod cuique donavi, vicissim vel quinquaginta millia. Sed hoc malo. Benignitas enim mea me ad cœlestem gloriam efferet.”—Scribit quoque ad filiam. “Misi tibi denarios ducentos quinquaginta, quas singulis convivis dederam, si vellent inter se inter cœnam vel talis vel par impar ludere.”—SÜETONIUS in Vitâ Augusti.

The following account of Caligula's iniquity and cruelty in gambling may be contrasted with the above-mentioned generosity of Augustus:—if however it be worthy the name of generosity to ruin people first, for the credit of relieving them afterwards.—Ac ne ex lusu quidem aleæ compendium spernens, plus mendacio atque etiam perjurio lucrabatur. Et quondam proximo collusori demandatâ vice suâ progressus in atrium domûs, cum prætereuntes duos equites Romanos locupletes sine morâ corripere confiscarique jussisset, exultans rediit gloriansque, nunquam se prosperiore aleâ usum.—SÜETONIUS,—Vita Caligulæ.

The same anecdote is also told of Caligula by Dion Cassius—*Hist. Rom. Lib. LIX.*

all his internal policy worth?—He might plan and regulate with consummate wisdom; but the laws he devised wanted their firmest sanction in the influence of their great guardian's example. But whatever share of fame Augustus might hope to gain from this vile source (and it is clear from his own letters that he expected much), yet he seems to fall short of the merits, such as they are, of one of his imperial successors, who certainly surpassed him in all gambling excellence. For the emperor Claudius was unbounded in his pursuit of the aleatorial art. Claudius, willing to lose no time, framed tables in his carriages, on which the important throw could not be affected by the motion; and that posterity might improve by his own practice and knowledge in the noble profession of dicing, Claudius wrote a book on the art of gambling:—but alas it has perished amid the wreck of empires and cruel ravages of time! For his steady adherence to this gambling science, this stupid emperor's punishment in the shades below has been ludicrously adjudged by Seneca to consist in playing perpetually with dice in a box without a bottom—as a fruitless Sisyphæan [H] labour.—To correct these abuses, which many of his predecessors in the imperial dignity had spread by the influence of their own example, and to put a stop (as far as the terror of civil punishment would go) to the increase of gambling iniquity, the good emperor Justinian enforced the old laws, which were numerous, and enacted fresh and severe ones against gamesters. Some of these offenders being seized and convicted of horrid blasphemies, the sure attendants of desperate gambling, had their hands cut off, and were led about the streets [I]

[H] Aleam studiosissime lusit Claudius, de cujus arte librum quoque emisit; solitus etiam in gestatione ludere, ita effredo alveoque adaptatis, ne lusus confunderetur.—SÆTONTIUS in Vitâ Claudii.

Tum Æacus jubet illum aleâ ludere pertuso fritillo: et cœperat fugientes semper tesseras quærere et nihil proficere.—SENECA, de Morte Claudii.

[I] See JORTIN's Remarks on Eccles. Hist. Vol. IV.

The laws of the empire both civil and ecclesiastical were severe against gaming; as indeed are the present laws in almost all nations of Europe at this day; it being a crime not more universal in its practice than in its condemnation.

N. B. As to cock-fighting at Rome, Pegge in his treatise above-mentioned is of opinion, that this was not much introduced there till very late: but that "quails" were more "pitted" against each other for gambling purposes than cocks.—This opinion seems confirmed by the good Antoninus's thankfulness—"that he had imbibed such dispositions from his preceptor, as had prevented him from "breeding quails for the fight."—See the emperor Antoninus's private Meditations, Book I. near the beginning.

riding on camels, as a public example. But the torrent of dissipation and its attendant streams of gambling flowed with too great rapidity and violence to be restrained by the force of edicts. When moral sense becomes dead in a nation, means will ever be found to evade or to defy the punishments of wholesome laws, and there is no occasion to refer to ancient times for a confirmation of this truth.

Among the Gothic kings, who reigned in Italy, mention is made of Theodoric (a wise and valiant prince) as a great lover of dice; of whom Sidonius, who was much at his court, thus reports.—“At those hours which the king allots to gaming, he collects the dice eagerly, inspects them earnestly, rattles them smartly, and delivers them forcibly. He converses in a familiar, jesting style, and bears retorts with good humour. He is silent at good throws, smiles at bad ones, is angry at neither, but acts the philosopher in both. When engaged with his instruments of play, you would suppose him handling his arms. His solicitude is only for victory. While gaming he lays aside his royal dignity, and encourages freedom and a level of distinction,” &c. [κ].—But his courtiers knew how to seize the moments of his success (which courtier-like they were not unmindful to allow him) as the most favourable and indulgent to their wishes. “When I have a petition to prefer (says Sidonius) I am easily conquered, and I lose my game, that I may win my cause.”

The account that Tacitus gives of the propensity of the ancient Germans to gambling, is a strong trait in the character of all the Scythian nations; from whom most of the modern Europeans (as well as the Germans) not only derive their origin, but many of their present habits and customs, of their failings [L] and

[κ] Quibus horis tabula cordi est, tesseras colligit rapidè, inspicit sollicitè, volvit argutè, mittit instantè. Joculariter compellat, patienter expectat: in bonis jactibus tacet, in malis ridet, in neutris irascitur, in utrisque philosophatur—putes illum et in calculis arma tractare. Sola est illi cura vincendi. Cum ludendum est, regiam sequestreat tantisper severitatem, hortatur ad ludum libertatemque communionemque. Sed ego aliquid obsecraturus facile vincor; et mihi tabula perit, ut causa salvetur.—SIDONIUS APOLLINARIS, Epist. &c. containing Theodoric's character.

[L] Ferunt Hunnos, cum sine legibus vivunt, alex solius legibus obedire, in procinctu ludere, tesseras simul et arma portare, et plures suis quàm hostilibus ictibus interire; frequenter autem tanto ardore

and virtues. “The Germans (says Tacitus) make gaming with dice a very serious occupation of their sober hours; and they play to such a desperate excess, that when all other stakes fail, their last throw is for personal liberty. The loser voluntarily submits to slavery, and, though younger and more robust than his antagonist, suffers himself to be bound and sold by him, if he be winner. Such is their adherence and obstinacy in a bad cause; but they call it “faith” (i. e. modern honour). They make a traffic of slaves of this sort, to release themselves from the shame of such a victory.”—The present race of Germans are not thought to have lost their gambling propensities, though a living traveller speaks rather favourably of them in this respect, or at least of the courts of some of their princes; and of the freedom of the capital Vienna in particular from this destructive vice [M].

The

ardore rapi, ut cum ea, quæ sola magna æstimant, arma victus tradiderit, ad unum aleæ jactum vitam suam potestati vel victoris vel sceneratoris addicit.—BULINGERUS in Gronovii Thesaur. Vol. VII. p. 905.

Aleam (quod mirere) sobriè inter seria exercent tantà lucrandi perdendive temeritate, ut cum omnia defecerunt extremo ac novissimo jactu de libertate et de corpore contendant. Victus voluntariam servitutem adit. Quamvis junior, quamvis robustior, alligari se ac venire patitur. Ea est in re pravâ pervicacia: ipsi fidem vocant. Servos conditionis hujus per commercia tradunt, ut se quoque pudore victoriæ exsolvant.—TACITUS, De Moribus Germanorum.

Stuckius (whose work was printed in 1582) writes thus of more modern Germans than those whom Tacitus describes. Ut autem olim, ita hodie quoque, aleæ lusus cum inter epulandum, tum post epulas, præsertim apud Germanos, est usitatissimus. Utuntur autem illo, præsertim jam vino madidi, ad se invicem partim vino adhuc magis ingurgitandum obruendumque, partim defraudandum pecuniâque emungendum. Nam is, qui ejusmodi ludo victus est, poculum vel invitatus minimeque sitiens, ac sæpius tot pocula, quot puncta jecerit, exhaurire cogitur.—STUCKII Opera. De Ludo Aleatorio in Antiquitatum convivialium Lib. III. C. xxii.

[M] “The little card-playing at the court of Brunswick is intended merely as a pastime; all kinds of gaming being discouraged. The duchess in particular always puts a very moderate stake on her cards. A man must have very bad luck to lose above twenty pistoles in an evening; so we are in no danger from gaming whilst at this court.”—Dr. MOORE’S View of Society and Manners in France and Germany, Vol. II. p. 66.

“I have never seen deep gaming at any of the German courts. What has approached nearest to it has been at masquerades, or where the sovereign was not present.”—Ditto, Vol. II. p. 276.

“We dine abroad two or three times a week. We sometimes see a little play, but never any deep gaming. At the Countess Thune’s, where I generally pass the evening, there is no play of any kind. The society there literally form a conversatione.”—Ditto, Vol. II. p. 310,—writing from Vienna.

“I imagine

The warmth with which "dice-playing" is condemned in the early ages of the church, as well by edicts and canons as in the writings of the fathers [N], is a sufficient proof of its general and excessive prevalence through the nations of Europe. When cards were introduced in the fourteenth century, they only added new fuel to the flame of gambling; and it soon became as necessary to restrain their use, as it had before been that of dice: and the two now hold a joint empire of ruin and desolation over their devoted victims. Among these it is a concern to be obliged to reckon an Henry IVth of France, whose example in this particular was of great detriment to his people. His passion for play rendered this destructive vice fashionable, which, if it be traced through all its terrible consequences, is alone sufficient to throw a kingdom [o] into confusion.

Neither

"I imagine there is no city in Europe, where a young gentleman, after his university-education is finished, can pass a year with so great advantage, as in Vienna; because, if properly recommended, he may mix on an easy footing with people of rank, and have opportunities of improving by the conversation of sensible men and accomplished women. In no capital could he see fewer examples, or have fewer opportunities of deep gaming, open profligacy, or gross debauchery. He may learn to pass his time agreeably independent of a continued round of amusements. He may be gradually led to enjoy rational conversation, and at length acquire the blessed faculty of being satisfied with moderate pleasures."—Ditto, Vol. II. p. 313:

But notwithstanding these favourable accounts, the author of this work has been informed, that in the last German war, there was an infinite deal of gambling between the officers of the English army and the German princes and nobility; that faro-tables were kept in abundance, and moreover that many officers made away with themselves in consequence of their losses:—and that the Hessian and German officers also introduced much gambling into our American army in the last war. It was also said to the credit of our nation, that the German princes and officers were fond of playing with the English in particular, because there was most fairness and honour in their play.

[N] See a number of these collected by Taylor in his "Ductor Dubitantium," Book IV. C. i. Question, "Whether it be lawful to play at cards or dice?"—It seems needless to quote these here.—See also Stuckius, *De Ludo Aleatorio* in *Antiq. Conviv.* Lib. III. C. xxii. or Hyde, *De Ludis Orientalibus*, in the Part, "An aut quatenus Alea sit licita?"

[o] "The money Henry lost at play only would have answered great public expences. I was ordered to pay Edward Fernández, a Portuguese, at one time, "thirty-four thousand pistoles," which the king had lost to him. This order is dated Aug. 27, 1608. He often sent me other orders for two or three thousand pistoles, and many more for sums less considerable. However it must be confessed, that this passion for play never hindered him from agreeing to any proposal for the public good. (In a note.) This Edward Fernandez was a rich Portuguese banker, who lent money to courtiers for play on pledges at large interest. "I do not know (says Monsieur de Perefex) what answer to make

to

Neither was an illustrious successor of Henry behind hand in encouraging this failing even of great minds, both in his own person and in the countenanced practice of his courtiers. For the court of Lewis XIV. was full of gaming, and the king himself was by his example, though contrary to the spirit of his own laws, its greatest [P] encourager.—To so high a pitch was the spirit of gambling arrived among the military order in France in the next reign, and so productive was it found to be of disorders, of quarrels, and rencounters, that the great Belleisle procured a rule to be issued from the tribunal of the marshals of France, to limit the sums to be played for, by which means also he hoped to

to those, who charge Henry with being fonder of cards and dice than was becoming a great king; and that besides, he played ill, being eager to win, timorous when large sums were depending, and out of humour when he lost.” It requires no answer, I should tell this writer. It is a blot in the life of this great prince. How can one justify a passion for play, when pushed to such a degree? What can be more pernicious in the master of a whole nation? what example worse? what can have a stronger tendency to subversion of order and corruption of manners?”—See SULLY’s Memoirs, Vol. V. Year 1608.

The following anecdote reflects honour on Casimir II. king of Poland (who died in 1194). He won a considerable sum of money at play from a nobleman. The loser being in a rage struck his prince, and immediately fled. He was apprehended and condemned to die. But Casimir would not suffer the sentence to be executed. “It was no wonder (the king said) that the nobleman losing his money and enraged against fortune, whom he could not come at, should revenge himself on her favourite.” He owned “himself” most to blame in encouraging gaming by his own example—and restored the nobleman to his honours and his money.—See Modern Univ. Hist.

[P] The author met with the following passage in a Magazine, as extracted from a French writer, whose name was not mentioned. “The year 1648 was the era of card-playing at court. Cardinal Mazarine played deep and with finesse. He easily drew in the king and queen to countenance this entertainment. Every one, who had expectations at court, learned to play at cards. Soon after the humour changed, and games of chance came into vogue to the ruin of many considerable families. Card-playing, which the court had taken from the army, soon spread from the court into the city, and from the city pervaded the country towns.”

“The court, after the triumphant return of Mazarine, was entirely engaged in gaming, dancing, and comedy.”—VOLTAIRE’S Age of Lewis XIV. Vol. II.

“They gamed a good deal in the journies to Marli and Fountainbleau, but never at Madame de Maintenon’s.”—Ditto, Vol. II.

“Faro was prohibited under severe penalties, but the king did not prohibit it to himself, and the court never gamed more than at that time. The people will always despise those laws, which are violated by the prince; who is however most bound by them, since he cannot game but at the expence of others.”—Memoirs for the Hist. of Madame de Maintenon, and of the last Age, Vol. IV. p. 225.

regulate

regulate its excess [Q]. But this restriction appears to have been as insufficient as all other laws will be, which are not practically enforced by the law-makers themselves ; since gambling exists at this day in full force [R] among the French.

But

[Q] "Gaming, the effect of the idleness prevailing in camps, being a continual source of quarrels and ruin among the military, in order to restrain the cupidity of those, who are unfortunately too much tormented with this passion, and especially to disappoint the industrious activity of sharpers, which it creates, marshal Belleisle engaged the tribunal of the marshals of France (May 6, 1760) to give out an ordonnance, by which it was decreed, that no applications could be made to their tribunal for gaming debts exceeding the sum of one thousand livres. It was forbidden to all gentlemen and military persons under pain of imprisonment, and on their word of honour, to play for any thing above that sum ; and it was ordered to all those, who had any demands to make, to specify them all in the same petition, signifying the cause of the debts of honour and other engagements required to be fulfilled." —JUSTAMOND'S Translation of the private Life of Lewis XV. Vol. IV. P. 3.

[R] "I found little or no difficulty in excusing myself from play. The marquis undertook to make this matter easy ; and nothing can be a greater proof of his influence in some of the most fashionable circles, than his being able to introduce a man without a title and who never games." —Dr. MOORE'S Travels, Vol. I. P. 26. writing from Paris.

The following is extracted from Mercier's *Tableau de Paris*, 1783, Chap. Games of Hazard.

"The emperor of China has said—I prohibit the games of hazard ; if any one braves my orders, he will brave Providence, which does not allow any thing fortuitous ; he will contradict the voice of nature, which cries out to us,—“hope, but labour, the most active shall be the best rewarded.”—These games convey a real prejudice to man ; since they stand in the place of labour, economy, and the love of the arts. They prostrate man before fantastic beings, chance, hazard, destiny. Instead of remedying the inequality of riches, they give money to him, who has it already, and who is more greedy of it. They snatch away from a man the idea of enriching himself by lawful means ; they nourish and enflame his desires, and after deceiving these, they abandon their possessor to despair.—It is in these assemblies, where dupes are engaged with sharpers, that we see countenances disfigured by all the disgraceful passions, rage, remorse, and savage joy. We have reason to call these assembly-rooms,—an hell. This vice is punished of itself, but yet is not to be destroyed in the hearts, which it ravages.—There was play formerly in the houses of the ambassadors ; they were privileged houses ; but they play there no more. A new order has lately put some obstacle to this madness ; but it has already recovered its course on another part ; it is a vice too much united with political vices to enable us to flatter ourselves with a likelihood of its extirpation, whilst we suffer others to increase. If gold or silver in this rapid circulation of exchanging hands could but fall into those of a poor man ! But no ; it goes back towards the banker by profession, the banker of faro ; and the lonely punters always lose, because certain rich men, who are leagued together, hold the bank. If one created a play of perfect equality, it would still be blameable, but it would cease to be a public robbery. A tennis-court is granted by patronage to a woman of quality to retrieve her fortune. She clears off

But if French levity can be fixed by a love of play, its influence is less wonderful over the indolence and gravity of the Spanish character. The Spaniard has long been stigmatised for his propensity to deep gaming. The Spaniard carried his love of card-playing with him into the new world; since the Mexican prince Montezuma is said to have been much delighted with seeing [s] the Spanish soldiers play at cards. A great traveller also paints the Spaniards at the beginning of the sixteenth century, as the most addicted to gaming of any nation he ever visited. "I have travelled (says he) through all parts of Spain, and though in many places I have scarce been able to procure a glass of wine or a bit of bread, or any of the first conveniences of life, yet I never went through a village so mean and obscure, in which I could not have purchased a pack of cards [r]."

Indeed

all charges four hundred livres at a sitting, reckons with her servants, and shares with her patrons. They use cards for ten louis; the woman finds herself very well paid for it; and it is said, that these are things, which it is necessary to tolerate. Those who are interested would find a contrary reasoning very absurd. We shall say soon with Mandeville—"that commerce would languish, that the state would be impoverished, if the women would think of being chaste, and the fathers of families economical."—The tennis-courts are dangerous; but let us consider at the same time, that a young man who travels in France, or who enters into the world, and enjoys an income of fifty thousand livres, ought not to be afraid of abandoning that sum in the course of a year to the chance of honourable play; that depends upon the choice of houses. If he refuse the sacrifice, one may affirm, that he will travel ill, will not see the world, which he ought to have seen, will conduct himself meanly, and will perhaps fall into bad company, where he will incur more expence than in good. The fear of being a dupe will drag him into dangers still more real, and it is as grievous for a rich man not to play, as to play with passion, or indeed with the first comer. Such is the usual language of the world, and I only here repeat it, as the least of evils. What a difference between the rake, which the gardener draws about the earth, to fertilise its surface, and the rake, which the players draw over the gaming-table, to bring to themselves the riches which they gain! The resemblance of the denomination causes some remarkable ideas to present themselves upon the rustic labours of the one, and the idle and covetous employment of the other."

[s] An. Dom. 1519. See Herrera, as quoted by Barrington on Cards in *Archæologia*, Vol. VIII. 1787.

[r] "Hispani maximè ludunt, et naturâ ad ludendum maximè sunt propensi.—Jam diu longè latèque Hispaniam lustranti mihi sæpe contigit, ut cum multis locis nihil eorum, quæ ad victum faciunt, non panem, non vinum invenire possem; tamen nunquam castellum aut vicum ullum adeo abjectum et obscurum transire potui, in quo non cartulæ vènerent."—PASCASIUS JUSTUS de Aleâ. Amstel. 1642.

Indeed there is no European nation, where high gaming does not constitute

An instance of Spanish generosity in gaming is recorded by Voltaire, to which if credit may be given, it redounds to their national honour : but Voltaire loves to deal in the marvellous and splendid, rather than in plain and simple matter of fact ; and he probably extends a single instance or two, exerted on a particular occasion, into a general habit or custom. “ The grandees of Spain (says he) had a generous ostentation, which was greatly taking with foreigners and obtained only in Spain : this was to divide the money won at play among all the bye-standers of whatever condition. Montrefor relates, that when the Duke of Lerma, the Spanish minister, entertained Gaston, brother of Lewis XIII. with all his retinue in the Netherlands, he displayed a magnificence of an extraordinary kind. This prime minister, with whom Gaston spent several days, used to put two thousand louis d’ors on a large gaming-table after dinner. With this money Gaston’s attendants and even the prince himself sat down to play.”——Voltaire’s General Hist. and State of Europe. P. VI. C. i.

The following anecdote however gives us no very favourable idea of Spanish generosity to strangers in the article of gambling in modern times :—and the worst of it is, the suitability of its application to “ more capitals than one” among the kingdoms of Europe.—“ After the bull-feast I was invited to pass the evening at the hotel of a lady, who had a public card-assembly. This recreation, innocent and trifling when first invented, is become a regular profession in France and Spain. This vile method of subsisting on the folly of mankind is confined in Spain to the nobility. None but women of quality are permitted to hold banks, and there are many whose faro-banks bring them in a clear income of a thousand guineas a year. The lady, to whom I was introduced, is an old countess, who has lived near thirty years on the profits of the card-tables in her house. They are frequented every day, and though both natives and foreigners are duped of large sums by her and her cabinet-junto, yet it is the greatest house of resort in all Madrid. She goes to court, visits people of the first fashion, and is received with as much respect and veneration, as if she exercised the most sacred functions of a divine profession. Many widows of great men keep gaming-houses and live splendidly on the vices of mankind. If you be not disposed to be either a sharper or a dupe, you cannot be admitted a second time to these assemblies. I was no sooner presented to the lady than she offered me cards ; and on my excusing myself, because I really could not play, having never been able to reconcile myself to the needless study of learning any one game, she made a very wry face, turned from me, and said to another lady in my hearing, that she wondered how any foreigner should have the impertinence to come to her house, for no other purpose than to make an apology for not playing. My Spanish conductor, unfortunately for himself, had not the same apology. He played and lost his money, two circumstances which constantly follow one another in these houses. While my friend was thus playing the fool, I attentively watched the countenance and motions of the lady of the house. Her anxiety, address, and assiduity, were equal to that of some skilful shopkeeper, who has a certain attraction to engage all to buy, and diligence to take care, that none shall escape the net. I found out all her privy-counsellors, by her arrangement of her parties at the different tables ; and whenever she showed an extraordinary eagerness to fix one particular person with a stranger, the game was always decided the same way, and her good friend was sure to win the money. In short it is hardly possible to see good company at Madrid, without your resolve to leave a purse of gold at the card-assemblies of their nobility.”—Observations in a Tour through Spain, as quoted in Polite Traveller, Vol. II.

one of its polite and fashionable [u] amusements; and it were much to be wished, that our own island was not swallowed up in this general vortex of folly and destruction.

Experience affords too undeniable a proof, that our own nation yields to no other in the pursuits of gaming. It is melancholy to reflect, how predominant is the passion for play among the first circles of distinction! how genius and abilities of the first rate become its voluntary votaries, and how the framers of excellent laws in reprobation of the practice, are the first to fall under the temptation of their breach! It is grievous to observe, how the same spirit of gambling pervades every inferior order of society! how the gentleman is a slave to its indulgence! how the merchant and the mechanic are the dupes of its imaginary prospects! how it engrosses the citizen and occupies the rustic!—and thus town and country becoming a prey to its despotism, there is scarce an obscure village to be found, wherein this bewitching basilisk does not exercise its powers of fascination and destruction. Gaming in England is become rather a science than an amusement of social intercourse. The doctrine of chances is studied with an assiduity that would do honour to better subjects; and calculations are made on arithmetical and geometrical principles, to determine the degrees of probability attendant on games of mixed skill and chance, or even on the fortuitous throws of the dice. But it is not meant here to enter further into English gaming in particular; the propensity alone was to be pointed out, of which the English participate in common with other nations.

The following reflections present themselves from this summary review of the gambling propensity, to which all nations seem subject, whether ancient or modern, barbarous or enlightened, viz. that its effects are similar in all, and where carried to excess, that it is one of the most violent and desperate of human passions; that if the Malayan, or wild American, be ready to play away his wife and children, or the old German to stake his personal liberty, the modern and polished European does no less, though from the customs and laws of

[u] Gaming prevails in Sweden and Russia. (See Coxe's Travels, Vol. I. 440 and 454; and Vol. II. 303.)—In Venice, Florence, Naples. (See Dr. Moore's Travels through Italy; and others.)—The Turks indeed are an exception to the gambling itch in other countries; and by their obedience to their law in this respect, set an example worthy the imitation of Christians.

his own times his frantic behaviour seems to wear a different aspect. For does the polite gamester of these days scruple to hazard the dearest interests of his family, or to bring his wife and children to poverty, misery, and ruin? Sell them indeed he cannot; for which perhaps they are more indebted to the guardianship of the laws than to their natural protector's affection or prudence.—But still his family have no exclusive right of complaint; since the gamester is equally ready to stake his own freedom and independence, and even his life itself, on the cast of a die. But whilst he thus degrades himself from his own personal dignity and consequence, whilst he is content to live in obscurity in a foreign land, or to enslave his voice, his judgment, his honour, to the will of another in his own country; or when he terminates his despair at once in the outrage of self-murder, what right has this polished and enlightened gambler to deem himself superior to him, whom he would fain denominate the child of ignorance and barbarism?

C H A P. III.

BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGIN OF DICE, CARDS, AND THE PURSUITS OF THE TURF.—THEIR PROGRESS IN ENGLAND.

C O N T E N T S.

The principal means of gambling are dice, cards, and the pursuits of the turf.—The early invention of the die, not long after the age of Homer.—The antiquity of horse-racing; the ancient honours of the turf compared with the modern ones.—Olympic charioteers compared with New-market jockeys.—Ancient and modern rewards of the turf compared; and also requisites of the competitors.—Racing among the Romans in the times of the emperors.—No nation rivals Britain in the pursuits of the turf.—Invention of cards.—Long used in the East before known in Europe.—No certain traces of cards in Europe before the middle of the fourteenth century.—Not clear, whether of Spanish or French origin; but conjectures more in favour of the former.—Figures of cards formed on ideas of chivalry.—The trump

trump or triumph suit.—Restraints laid on the use of cards in France as early as 1404 and 1426.—Card-playing quickly spread through all European nations, as a most fashionable species of diversion.—Difference between games of skill and games of chance.—Games on the dice subject to chance only; games on the cards are of a mixed nature.—Professed gamblers in either equally culpable.—The game of chess commended, as a game of pure skill; which, though of high antiquity, has never deviated from its original innocence, by administering to the purposes of gambling.—Remarks on the public countenance given to horse-racing in England.—The introduction and progress of dice and cards in England.—Laws made against gaming nugatory, because not impartially executed.

THOUGH the methods of gambling may be infinitely varied, and there is no mode of relaxation or diversion, but what may be made subservient to its encroaching spirit, yet its engines of most extensive destruction are found to exist in the use of dice, cards, and the pursuits of the turf [x]. By tracing the origin of these species of recreations it will appear, how widely they have deviated from their primitive innocence and have degenerated into vehicles of vice and ruin.

The knights of hazard, who live but in the rattle of the box, little know perhaps to whom they are indebted for the invention of their [y] favourite cube. They will

[x] E O tables (in which balls are used) are likewise of most destructive consequences, highly adapted to encourage the spirit of gambling, and full of fraudulent practice. Their origin (or at least their being much in use in England) could not be previous to the year 1739, when an act of parliament was passed to suppress all kinds of private lotteries; and the games then most used, called "ace of hearts," "pharaoh," "basset," and "hazard," were deemed lotteries. The E O table was first set up at Tunbridge, and proved extremely profitable to the proprietors. The famous beau Nash, who was at that time a needy gamester, viewed its profits with envy, and determined on introducing it at Bath. However he is said first to have consulted some lawyers respecting its legality, who declared no law then existed against it. Nash therefore introduced the E O table at Bath, where it publicly flourished for a short time: but the legislature interfered in the year 1745, and inflicted severe penalties on the keepers of such tables. It is called in the act, the game of "roulet, otherwise roly-poly."—See the life of Nash; and also for the acts of parliament abovementioned,—a small volume containing statutes, reports, and determinations on this subject, and entitled "the Laws of Gaming." Printed 1764.

[y] The term "cube" (which is the figure of a die) comes originally from the Arabic word "ca'b or ca'be" (from whence the Greeks had their *κυβος* and *κυβειζ*), which is used to signify any solid figure perfectly

will solace themselves no doubt on being told, that they are pursuing a diversion of the highest antiquity, and which has been regularly handed down through all civilised, as well as barbarous, nations to their own times. But however custom and universal practice may have established the use of the die, it can scarce be supposed to have sanctified its gross abuse.

Herodotus says (B. I.), “ that the Lydians claimed the origin of many games, “ which they practised in common with the Greeks ; and that among the rest “ they ascribed to themselves the invention of the cube or die, in the reign of “ one of their kings, whom they made co-temporary with Hercules ;”—that is, in those fabulous ages preceding the Trojan war. But the Greeks yield not up the point ; since they give the invention of many sportive games, and of the use of the die in particular, to Palamedes [z] the Eubæan, who lived in the times of the Trojan war, or nearly twelve hundred years before the christian era. The stream of later writers has generally flowed in favour of Palamedes ; but the very learned Hyde in his treatise of oriental games [A] opposes this current, and from an accurate investigation of the subject, which it would be needless here to repeat, concludes, “ that the cube or die, in its present perfect “ form and as an engine of sport, was unknown in the age of which Homer “ wrote ; because it is never mentioned by the poet, who notices other games

perfectly square every way ; such as the geometrical cube, the die used in play, and the temple at Mecca, which is of the same figure.—The Persic name for the “ die ” is “ dād ; ” whence among the Spaniards, Portuguese, and Italians, it is called “ dado ; ” and in old French “ det, ” in plural “ dets ; ” in modern French “ de and dez ; ” from whence our English name “ die ” and its plural “ dies or dice. ”—See Hyde “ De Ludis Orientalibus, ” under the parts “ De Tesseriis seu Aleis, ” and “ Historia Aleæ. ”

[z] Palamedes was a prince of celebrated genius. He is said to have added four letters to the Grecian alphabet ; to have invented many games ; to have introduced the use of weights and measures, and to have been skilful in the methods of marshalling an army. He was the person, who detected the counterfeit madness of Ulysses, when he was unwilling to go to the Trojan war ; this he did by putting the infant Telemachus in the way of the plough, which Ulysses was driving ; who however carefully turned it aside from hurting his child. But the crafty Ithacan never forgave Palamedes, and at length compassed his apparent infamy and death in the Grecian camp by an instance of consummate treachery.

[A] Printed at Oxford 1694. See the part “ De Aleæ inventore et antiquitate ”—and his quotations and criticisms on the subject.

“ of that sort then in use : but that it was well known in the days of Aristophanes, who introduces it in his comedies ; and that therefore its invention ought to be placed between those periods ; but by whom it was actually produced, or at what precise time, he does not pretend to have [B] discovered.”

Now as Aristophanes lived above four hundred years before the christian era, it is certain that the cube or die has been in use as an instrument of play for at least “ two and twenty hundred years”—and how much longer is uncertain. The great antiquity therefore of the die, as an instrument of pastime [c] is undoubted, and the general cause assigned for its invention was the salutary purpose of amusing and relaxing the mind from the pressure of difficulties, or from the fatigues and toils of protracted war. Time however has matured this instrument of recreation into an engine of utter destruction, and the intended palliative of care and labour has proved the fostering nurse of innumerable evils. This diminutive cube has usurped a tyranny over mankind for above two thousand years, and continues at this day to rule the world with despotic sway ; levelling all distinctions of fortune in an instant by the “ fiat” of its single turn.

A brief inquiry into the primitive and pure honours of the turf shall engage our next attention, whose pursuits are of more ancient date than the invention of the die. Such an useful and noble animal as the horse could not but command a distinguished notice in the earliest ages, as well as engage the powers.

[B] Apollonius Rhodius in the Argonautics makes Cupid and Ganymede amuse themselves “ αἰτραγαλῶν,” talis, that is, with little squares made of bones and figured. Homer also makes the ghost of Patroclus when addressing Achilles say, “ that he (Patroclus) once killed a man in a rage at his ill-success in play, being “ ἀμφ’ ἀστραγαλοῖσι χρολαθεῖς.”—Euripides makes the chorus in his Iphigenia in Aulis say, “ I saw the two Ajaxes, and Protefilaus recreating themselves μορφαισι πολυπλοκοῖς “ πεισσῶν,” cum-multiplicibus figuris calculorum, that is, pebbles of various figures used for the purposes of play ; to which our table-men at drafts and backgammon seem to have succeeded.—Penelope’s suitors also are made to divert themselves πεισσῶν. But no mention is made any where κῦβων, as being the diversion of those ancient heroes. The fact seems to be, that the κῦβος was an improvement upon the ἀστραγαλός, but later than the times of the Trojan war.

[c] Those, who are inclined to enter deeply into the historical part “ De Alea,” will find both information and amusement in Hyde’s work “ De Ludis Orientalibus,” or in Gronovius, Vol. VII. who has collected the works of Meursius, Bulinger, Souterius, Senftlebius, and Calcagninus on this subject.

of eloquence and poetry [D] in the description of his unrivaled excellences. His swiftness, strength, and docility must ever have been objects of the first attention and pleasure, and consequently few public games or diversions of ancient times were exhibited, in which this noble animal did not bear a considerable part. It would be needless to enlarge on the high antiquity of horse and chariot races, which have been celebrated in the earliest ages of history. It may be sufficient to observe, that to encourage agility and manly vigour, as well as skill and dexterity in the management of the fleet courser, was the laudable purport of these sportive exercises. The sturdy strength and muscular exertions of an Olympic charioteer exhibit a striking contrast to the spider-like [E] form and emaciated figure of a Newmarket jockey. The rewards of victory also were as plain and simple in the Grecian games, as they were distinguishing and honourable. A garland of palm, or laurel, or parsley, or pine leaves, served to adorn the brow of the fortunate victor, whilst his name stood a chance of being transmitted to posterity in the strains of some lofty Pindar. The rewards of modern days are indeed more substantial and solid, being paid in weighty gold or its equivalent (no matter whether obtained by the ruin of others), while the fleet coursers and their exulting proprietors stand conspicuous in the lists of a Pond, Heber, and Weatherby [F]. Nor was the cause of morality formerly overlooked in the exhibition of these useful and honourable pastimes; but there was an happy union of utility, pleasure, and virtue. A spotless life and unblameable manners, a purity of descent by being born in wedlock through several generations, and a series of creditable relations, were indispensable qualifications of a candidate on the Olympic turf. It is true, there is at least as much attention paid to purity and faultlessness on the plains of Newmarket; but the application is to the blood and pedigree [G] of the horse, not of his rider. Such were the unsullied honours of the ancient stadium or race ground. One must suppose however, that in process of time the decisions became warped

[D] See the description of an horse by Homer, Virgil, and the author of the book of Job, compared in "Guardian, N^o 86."

[E] See jockeys described in notes on Newmarket in the next chapter.

[F] Authors of the Racing-Calendar.

[G] Newmarket or the English turf, as the source of much iniquitous gambling, shall be noticed in the following chapter.

and interested, as the manners of the age grew less scrupulous; that intrinsic merit declined with the spirit of freedom, and that the determinations of the Olympic judges, as well as the answers of the Pythian oracle, could be taught to “philippize [H].”

The chariot-race also maintained at all times a distinguished rank amid the diversions of the Roman circus; but it especially engaged the eager attention of the people under some of the first emperors. The charioteers were divided into four companies distinguished by their dress, and the whole body of the citizens ranked themselves under the banners of their favourite colour, according as they wished well to the fraternity of the “red,” the “white,” the “azure,” or the “green.” Of these associations the green was in favour at court during the reigns of Caligula and Nero, who were themselves imperial jockeys. The green therefore, it may be presumed, was generally victorious, as there could be little expectation of a disinterested decision amid such [I] dregs of Romulus. After

[H] See two ingenious little volumes entitled, *Newmarket, or an Essay on the Turf*, Anon. 1771. In these the laws of ancient and modern racing are humorously contrasted.

[I] *Totam hodie Romam circus capit, et fragor aurem Percutit, eventum “viridis” quo colligo panni.*—Juv. II. 196.

Edidit et circenses plurimos a manè usque ad vesperam, quosdam autem præcipuos minio et chrysocollâ constrato circo; nec ullis nisi ex senatorio ordine aurigantibus.—Aurigabat ipse Caligula extructo plurifariam circo.—Suet. *Vita Caligulæ*.

Equorum studio vel præcipue ab ineunte ætate flagravît Nero. Mox et ipse aurigare sæpius voluit.—Suet. *Vita Neronis*.

Omne hoc tempus inter pugillares et libellos jucundissimâ quiete transmisi. “Quemadmodum (inquis) in urbe potuisti?”—Circenses erant, quo genere spectaculi ne levissimè quidem teneor. Nil novum, nil varium, nil quod non semel spectâsse sufficiat: quo magis miror, tot millia virorum tam pueriliter identidem cupere, currentes equos, insistentes curribus homines videre. Si tamen aut velocitate equorum, aut hominum arte traherentur, esset ratio nonnulla. Nunc favent panno, pannum amant; et si in ipso cursu medioque certamine, hic color illuc, ille huc transferatur, studium favorque transibit, et repente agitadores illos, equos illos, quos gratiâ procul noscitant, quorum clamitant nomina, relinquunt. Tanta autoritas in unâ vilissimâ tunicâ. Mitto apud vulgus, quod vilius tunicâ est: sed apud quosdam graves homines, quos ego quum recordor, in re inani, frigidâ, assiduâ, tam infatigabiliter desiderare, capio aliquam voluptatem, quod hâc voluptate non capior. Ac per hos dies libentissimè otium meum in literis colloco, quos alii otiosissimis occupationibus perdunt. Vale.—PLINII Ep. Lib. IX. 6.

After many intervening ages the “painted card” made its appearance; which however innocent and agreeable at its first introduction, has since proved the fertile source of much gambling iniquity. Though it seems generally supposed, that a sort of figures painted on thin wood or pasteboard and resembling cards, had been long before used in China, yet these did not find their way into Europe, till a late period: and then indeed from a total alteration in the figures, suits, and manner of using them, they seem to have been considered rather as a new invention than even a distant imitation. Had that learned orientalist Hyde lived to have completed his “*Historia Chartiludii*,” which he had in contemplation to have added to his history of other oriental games, our curiosity would have been fully satisfied on this subject. But now it remains for some one else equally skilled, as Hyde was, in oriental languages and literature, to undertake the work; and to undertake it also (lest it should be thought too trifling a pursuit for a man of deep learning) as Hyde did—“for the filling up his “hours allotted to recreation.” For he deemed himself at liberty without imputation of frivolous employment, to spend some small portions of that time, which others consumed in large ones at the games themselves, in searching into their origin and tracing their progress from remote ages [κ] of antiquity.

An

“The race in its first institution was a simple contest of two chariots, whose drivers were distinguished by “white” and “red” liveries: two additional colours, a “light green” and “a cærulean blue” (*prafini et veheti*) were afterwards introduced. The four factions soon acquired a legal establishment—a mysterious origin; and their fanciful colours were derived from the four seasons of the year, or according to others, from the elements. The blind ardour of the people devoted their lives and fortunes to the colour they espoused. Such folly was disdained and indulged by the wisest princes; but the names of Caligula, Nero, Vitellius, Verus, Commodus, Caracalla, and Elagabalus, were enrolled on the blue and green factions of the circus: they frequented their stables, applauded their favourites, chastised their antagonists, and deserved the esteem of the populace, by the natural or affected imitation of their manners. The bloody and tumultuous contest continued to disturb the public festivity, till the last age of the spectacles of Rome; when Theodoric, from a motive of justice or affection, interposed his authority to protect the “greens” against the violence of a consul and patrician, who were passionately addicted to the “blue” faction of the circus.”—GIBBON’S Roman History, 4to. Vol. IV. P. 60.

[κ] *Mihi autem de ludis scribenti, meritò quidem apologiæ loco sint exempla magnorum virorum, qui sine ullo gravitatis dispendio non tantùm ludos, sed et res adhuc multò leviores tractarunt. Ejusmodi est Calcagnini “Encomium culicis;” Julii Scaligeri “Laudes anseris;” Heinſii “Elogium pediculi; et Melancthonis “Laus formicæ,” &c. Nec vitiò vertatur mihi, quod tempus meliore cum frustu*

An inquiry into the origin of cards has employed the thoughts and pens of some learned antiquarians of our own and other nations ; but they have confined their researches to European cards alone ; nor does the present writer pretend to add any thing to their investigations ; but only to lay before his readers, what seems to be the general result of the inquiries that have been hitherto made into the antiquity of European card-playing. What has been advanced on the subject of cards by various writers amounts to thus much. “ That no traces of cards are to be found in Europe previous to the middle of the fourteenth century :—that it is not clear, whether they were of French or Spanish invention ; but that the conjectures seem better grounded, which favour the latter opinion :—that no other nation advances any claim, but these two :—that the first accounts we have of cards come from France ; but that some of the principal games are evidently [L] of Spanish extraction :—that whichever nation borrowed them from the other, it presently made them in a manner its own, by an alteration of the names of the suits, and an adaptation of the depicted figures to certain circumstances of their own kingdoms :—that the ancient cards of both nations, particularly the [M] court-cards, exhibit strong marks of the age of chivalry, in which they were invented :—that the giving pre-eminence or victory to a certain suit, by the name of “ trump or triumph ” suit, is a strong trait of the martial ideas of the inventors of these games :—that if not invented, they were at least first much used in France in the reign of Charles VI. that weak monarch, to divert whose melancholy and dejection of spirits, as many

fructu non elocaverim, cum horas tantum succisivas huic otio impenderim. Hæc enim otiando et quasi ludendo scripsi, quamvis aliàs non sum egregius lusor, nec eo exercitii genere delector. Quam autem alii voluptatem ludos exercendo insectantur eaque fruuntur, eandem ego eorundem historiam scribendo, et antiquorum de eis vocabula et sententias explicando et enucleando amplector. (N. B. This refers to his Shahiludium or history of chess, to his Nerdiludium or history of the tables, and to some other oriental games he has described. He says also—conscripseram et prelo aptaveram alia quædam alio tempore edenda ; in quibus erit “ Historia Chartiludii ; ”—but this never appeared.)— See HYDE *De Ludis Orientalibus*, in his prefatory Address to the Reader.

[L] In particular the old game of “ Ombre ” (on which quadrille is formed), wherein all the names and terms are of Spanish extraction : likewise the game of “ Cientos ” (or an hundred points win) called by the French without meaning “ Piquet.”

[M] These are called “ Coate-cards ” by some ancient writers ; and then they signify no more than figures in particular dresses.

maintain [N], they owe their origin :—that they quickly became so fashionable, and at the same time so gambling a diversion, as to make it necessary to prohibit their indiscriminate use by strict canons and laws :—that these edicts bear an [O] early date in France after the supposed invention of cards, which shows how speedily, not only their use, but abuse, extended itself :—that in Spain the love of them soon became no less bewitching :—that from a connexion with one or other of these two nations, the use of cards was quickly diffused through most European nations, where they became the favourite diversion of the prince and the peasant, of the child and the hoary head.” The reader needs not information of their general estimation in his own days, or of the use that is made of them for the purposes of excessive gambling. To sooth the feelings of a disturbed mind, and to calm its hours of weakness and solicitude might be deemed a worthy cause of the invention or introduction of cards; but as they are now used, a doubt can scarce remain, whether they contribute more to compose or to torture the mind of man, to relieve his melancholy, or to drive him into madness.—Thus much may suffice to give the reader a general idea of the origin and nature of cards. To enter into a more minute investigation of the subject would be tedious in this place; but the notes and references subjoined will assist any one, who may wish for further information [P] concerning them.

In

[N] Charles VI. of France lost his senses in 1392, and lived thirty years afterwards. The occasion is said to have been as follows. This monarch and five of his courtiers disguised themselves like satyrs at a masquerade, by covering their naked bodies with linen habits close to their limbs; which habits were smeared over with resin, on which down was stuck. One of the company at the masquerade in a frolic running a light against one of them, as they were dancing in a ring, all the six were instantly enveloped in flames, and the whole company were put into the utmost consternation. Four of the six died two days after in dreadful agonies; and the king, who was before subject to a weakness of brain, was so overfret by the fright, as ever after to be totally incapable of government.”—— See Political Disquisitions, Vol. III. B. I. C. iii. on Masquerades.

[O] As early in France as the years 1404 and 1426.

[P] The four suits of cards are generally supposed to represent the four estates of a kingdom;—“the nobility and gentry”—“the ecclesiastics”—“the citizens or commercial men”—“the peasantry or husbandmen.”—The nobility are represented in the old Spanish cards by “*espada* or sword;” in the French by “*piques*, the pike or spear.” The ecclesiastical order is pointed out by “*copas* or sacramental cups,” which are painted on one of the suits of old Spanish cards, and by “*coeurs* or hearts” on French cards; thereby signifying choir-men, *gens de chœur* or ecclesiastics; from *choeur*

de

In the review that has been taken of dice and cards, which are become engines of so much gambling destruction, there appears a distinction to be made between games of skill and games of chance. The former require application, attention, and a certain degree of ability to promote success in them; while the latter are devoid of all that is rational, and equally within the reach of the highest and lowest capacity. To be successful in throwing the dice is one of the

de l'eglise, the choir of the church, that being esteemed the most important part or heart of the church. The Spaniards depicted their citizens or commercial men under "dineros, a coin;" the French by "carreaux, squares or lozenges;" importing perhaps unity of interest, equality of condition, regularity of manners, and the indispensable duty of this class of men to deal with one another "on the square." The Spaniards made "bastos or knotty clubs," an emblem of their peasantry; taken probably from the custom, that plebeians were permitted to challenge or fight each other with sticks and quarter-staves alone, but not with the sword or any arms of a gentleman; while the French peasantry were pointed out under ideas of husbandry, by the "trefles, trefoil or clover-grass."—Thus much for the names of the suits, which each nation constituted at pleasure. With regard to the depicted figures of the cards, each nation likewise followed its own inventions, though grounded in both on those ideas of chivalry, which then strongly prevailed. The Spanish cards, being enlisted (as it were) under the banners of the Spanish monarch, very naturally and properly were made to carry the insignia of his arms and accoutrements; and accordingly the "ace of dineros" was emblazoned with the royal arms of Spain supported by an eagle, with the reigning king's name inscribed, and the "deuce" of the same suit had the arms of Castile, Leon, and Arragon. On the other hand, the French cards were ornamented with fleurs de lis; and on the "king" of one of the suits was bestowed the name of Charlemagne. The Spanish kings, in conformity to the martial spirit of the times, when cards were invented, were all mounted on horseback, as befitted generals and commanders in chief; and next to the king in rank followed "el caballo," or a knight-errant on horseback (for the old Spanish cards had no queens), and the third in order was the "foto" or attendant, that is, the esquire or armour-bearer of the knight; all which was exactly conformable to those ideas of chivalry, which ruled the age. The same spirit prevailed in painting the French cards, though somewhat differently expressed. In their four kings they portrayed famous champions of antiquity, who founded great monarchies; these were, "David," "Alexander," "Julius Cæsar," and, in just compliments to their own great ancestor, "Charlemagne." They next followed up their own refinements of gallantry (which was one eminent branch of chivalry) and gave the second rank on their chequered papers to the ladies; appointing queens-consorts to their four kings, under the titles of "Argine" (being an anagram on "Regina"), "Pallas," "Esther," and "Judith;" which were symbols of "majesty," "wisdom," "piety," and "fortitude." In the third place ranked their "valets" or attendants on royal dignity; who seem with them to have been of the rank of "knights" (not esquires) from the names of some famous French knights being formerly painted on their cards.

The reader, who wishes to enter critically into the subject of different games on the cards may find information in the work of Menestrier, the Jesuit, in his book entitled "Bibliothèque curieuse

the most fickle achievements of fickle fortune; and therefore the principal game that is played with them is very properly and emphatically styled "hazard." But it requires some exertion of the mental powers, of memory at least, and a turn for such sort of diversions, to play well many games on the [Q] cards. The gamester of skill then may at first sight seem to deserve more favour than the gamester of chance. Now while cards are played merely as an amusement or diversion, there is no doubt more rationality in a recreation that requires some degree of skill and judgment in the performer than in one (like dice) totally devoid of all meaning whatever. But when the pleasure becomes a business, and a matter of mere gain, there is more innocence perhaps in a perfect equality of antagonists (which games of chance fairly played encourage) than where one party is likely to be an overmatch for the other by his superior knowledge of the game. Yet even games of chance may be "artfully" managed, and the most apparently casual throw of the die be made subservient to the purposes [R] of chicanery and fraud. The nature of cards must be mixed; most games having in them a portion of skill and of chance; since the success of the player must depend as much on the chance of the "deal," as on his skill in playing the game. But even the chance of the deal is liable to be perverted by all the tricks of shuffling and cutting; not to mention how the honourable player may be deceived in a thousand shapes by the craft of the sharper, during the playing of the cards themselves: consequently professed gamblers of all denominations, whether their games be of apparent skill or mere chance, may be hustled together, as being equally meritorious and equally infamous.

et instructive:"—in Bullet's "*Recherches historiques sur les Cartes à jouer*," printed at Lyons 1757; and in "*Eclaircissements historiques et critiques sur L'Invention des Cartes à jouer*," par M. l'abbé Rive (printed at Paris 1780,) who also mentions other French writers on the subject.—Some other writers, who have touched on the antiquity and invention of card-playing are Meerman (of Rotterdam) in "*Origines Typographicæ*," printed 1765.—Bowyer in "*Origin of Printing*" 1774.—Honourable Daines Barrington, Rev. Mr. Bowle, and Mr. Gough:—the observations of the three last gentlemen are to be found in "*Archæologia, or Miscellaneous Tracts relating to Antiquity*," published by the Society of Antiquaries, London, Vol. VIII. 1787.

[Q] However it is often found, that those, who play well at cards, exhibit no further instances of superior memory or judgment in other matters; and vice versa.

[R] See the next chapter, where the frauds of the gambler are laid open.

There is one game, which though it belongs to neither cards nor dice, nor is in any shape an instrument of destructive gambling, yet deserves a brief mention here, as a contrast to them both in point of innocence and rational amusement, and that is the game of "chefs."—If inquiry be made into its antiquity, it will be found to have been a game of Indian [s] invention of uncertain date, but introduced from thence into Persia about the middle of the sixth century. The Persians are supposed to have taught it the Arabians; with whom probably it traveled westward, when they spread themselves over Africa, Spain, and other countries, under the appellation of Saracens and Moors.—William the Conqueror [T] (who was himself a famous chefs-player) is said by some to have brought

[s] The invention of chefs (like that of other remote things) has been variously ascribed; some giving the honour of it to Palamedes before-mentioned; others attributing it to Chilo the Grecian sage, and others bringing it as low as the age of Pyrrhus, king of Epirus. But Hyde (see *De Ludis Orientalibus*) has displayed a fund of oriental and critical learning in settling the point of its being an Indian invention, and first communicated by the Indians to the Persians in the age of Justinian. Hyde also seems clearly to prove, that the "*ludus latronum seu latrunculorum*" so often mentioned by Roman writers, and particularly by Seneca, is not the game of "chefs" (as has generally been taken for granted) but the game at "drafts."—The *ludus latronum* (or in its diminutive *latrunculorum*, so called from the little figures, which were used to represent men, or at other times little stones, *calculi*) was a military game, in which the *latrones* were soldiers, who were to make depredations on each others territories. All warriors were in ancient days a sort of plunderers, and "*latrocinari*" signifies only to obtain booty by serving as a soldier; neither was it ever applied till later times, to an opprobrious mode of "thieving and stealing."—Hyde styles his treatise on chefs "*Historia Shabiludii*;" there being no Greek or Roman word to express a game unknown to those nations before the reign of Justinian; and he thus deduces the etymology of our word "chefs." The word "shah" in Arabic signifies king; and it was the monitory or watch-word used in playing the game, to point out, "that your king is in danger." The Europeans hearing this word used continually by the Arabians (from whom they learned the game) called the game itself by a small alteration "shach or schach;" each nation however accommodating it somewhat to its own language. Thus the Portuguese call it "shaque;" the Spaniards "escaque;" the Italians "scacco." The French use for their monitory word "eschey or eschec;" and the pieces they call "eschecs or eschéz;" from whence our English word of warning "check," and name of the game "chefs."—"Shah-mat" is the expression used in Persia and Arabia to signify the game is over, or that the king can call "no further assistance, but is weakened, harassed, and taken prisoner;" which (says Hyde) is the Persian meaning of the word "mât." The Europeans imitate this in their several languages, and from hence we derive our "check-mate."

[T] William the Conqueror was very fond of this game. He also instituted the court of exchequer in England, after the custom of Normandy. It takes its name from the French word "*echiquier*," which signifies a chess-board and also a court of judicature:—and "as there is no notion of an exchequer's existing (says Madox in his *Hist. of Exchequers*) without a chequered cloth thrown over the table"

brought this game into England, though others mention the time of the crusades.—It is a game held in great repute [u] in most nations, though somewhat varied

table" (which is a custom preserved to this day);—and as the game of chess was in such high repute in those times (infinitely more so than at present), it is very possible, that this chequered cloth from its imitation of the squares of a chess-board, might give name to the court of exchequer; which is also constantly called in bald Latin "scaccarium," still adhering to a chess-etymology. The reader, who is curious to see more of this matter may consult Hyde in his part "De Scaccario," or Madox's History of the Exchequer.—N. B. The squares on the chequered cloth were formerly used in casting up and settling the accounts.

[u] The Chinese play much at chess, but in a manner differing from the Europeans; as indeed do the eastern nations in general with respect to the pieces on each side. The Chinese pieces consist of a king, two guards, which attend the king, two elephants, two horsemen, two waggons, two cannons, and five pawns. Their board when set out represents two camps divided by a river, and the point aimed at is, to get into the enemies' camp with safety, and to take the king captive, which ends the game. (N. B. A full account of the Chinese method of playing the game is given in Loubere's History of Siam, and Remarks on Chinese Learning, &c. translated and printed in London 1693. Loubere was envoy from the French king to the king of Siam in 1687.)—The game of chess was known in America, as the Europeans found on their first discoveries; and it was played as in the East. (See Hyde.)—The Turks are great chess-players; and the more so, as the koran forbids games of chance for money.—The Icelanders play much at this game. (See Horrebow's History of Iceland and also the following account.) "In Purchas's Pilgrims it is said of the inhabitants of Iceland (whose longest night lasts three months); "in the winter-time they keep their beds many days and exercise themselves "in the game of chess."—This was written 1563; and according to the account of a native of that island, who is now in London, his countrymen still continue to amuse themselves at that game."—Twiss's Chess, Vol. I. 1787.

"This game of chess is not only of ancient standing and generally used in Iceland, where there is not a peasant, who has not a set of chess-men made of fish-bones, but all over the north. The Norwegian chronicle tells us, that Drogen the giant, foster-father of Herald surnamed the Hairy, having understood the great actions of his pupil, then king of Norway, sent him among other presents mentioned in the chronicle, a very fine and rich chess-table. This Herald reigned about 870. And if Encolpius in Petronius could boast, that he had seen Trimalcion play at draughts upon tables made of turpentine-wood and chrystals with men of gold and silver; I may boast to have played at chess with the countess Eleonore, natural daughter to the king of Denmark, married to count Ulefeld, great marshal and chief minister to the king of Denmark. The tables were inlaid with a white and yellow amber; the pieces of gold curiously wrought and enameled with the same colours as the tables. The kings and queens were dressed in royal robes and seated on thrones with crowns on their heads. The bishops had their mitres and habits richly adorned, and the knights were mounted on horses with fine trappings. The rooks were represented by elephants with towers on their backs. The men were little musqueteers presenting their guns close to their cheeks, as if expecting the word to fire."—See Account of Iceland by La Peyrere 1644, in Collection of Voyages and Travels, 1732. Folio. Vol. II.

Among

varied in its method of being played. It owed its birth to the camp, and in its origin was closely connected with military ideas; many of which however are less apparent at present, owing to the changes that have been made in the [x] names and figures of the pieces.—If any deviation from the primitive purity of chess, as an innocent and instructive pastime, be attempted to be traced, it will be found equally spotless in its present execution, as in its first invention; since being adapted to the disinterested notions of martial fame and honour, it disdains pecuniary rewards, and its views of conquest are for the glory of victory alone. If inquiry be made into the nature of the game, it consists in exertions of pure skill and deep judgment, being neither subject to chance nor capable of fraud. If attention be paid to the eagerness of its pursuit, it will be found, that notwithstanding its being devoid of all manner

Among the Gothic nations, to play well at chess was among the first accomplishments of the times. “In the history of Charles and Grymer, Swedish kings, the gallant Grymer is thus described as a man irresistible.—“He was a youth early distinguished in the profession of arms, who well knew, how to “die his sword in the blood of his enemies, to run over the craggy mountains, to wrestle, to play at “chess, trace the motion of the stars, and throw far from him heavy weights; in short he was possessed of every accomplishment, that could perfect and complete the hero.”—STRUTT’S View of Manners, &c. Vol. I. p. 86.

Chess was in high repute formerly among European nations, as Hyde proves at large. According to Edmondson’s Heraldry—“Twenty-six great families of England bear chess-rooks in their coats of arms. From the “Accedens of Armory” by Gerard Leigh, 4to. 1568, London, preserved in the herald’s office—“The field argent, a cheuron between three rockes ermines. This is a plaier in the “game of the chesses, and is called by that name. For as all castles have fower special towers to garde “them frō their enemies; so hath that square chesse-board fower of these, that standeth to gard the “kings and queens with all the people thereupon.”—TWISS’S Chess, Vol. I. 1787.

“Chess is played in all companies in Russia at this day; and even by tradesmen and common people at the doors of their shops and houses.”—COXE’S Travels through Russia, Vol. I.

[x] Ludimus effigiem belli, simulataque veris
Prælia, buxo acies fictas, et ludicra regna:
Ut gemini inter se reges, albusque nigerque
Pro laude oppositi certent bicoloribus armis.

VIDÆ Scacchia, at beginning.

The first piece is by all nations given to the king; the second place by eastern nations to pherz or pherzin, signifying in Persian—a wise man, a counsellor of the king, or his generallissimo; who is to be ready at hand to receive the royal commands, and is to move in all directions over the table to carry his orders. The third place is given in the east to Al Fil, signifying in Arabic the elephant, an animal

ner of interest, it is followed up with as much avidity [y], as if thousands were depending on the event. Chéfs then may be deemed a truly noble and royal game, and worthy the attention of those [z] great personages, who are recorded to have excelled in its practice. The only objection that seems to lie against it, as a “mere pastime,” is this, that it is too full of study and thoughtfulness to answer the purposes of relaxation or unbending the mind, which on such occasions should be amused without any fatigue or exertion of its powers. For this reason chéfs has been styled a philosophic game, fit only to be played by an Archimedes with a Newton.

much used in Indian wars, with a tower and archers on its back.—Now these two last have been changed in Europe into a queen and a bishop; probably in conformity to the gallantry of chivalry and the zeal of crusades; but most unmeaningly in pursuing the idea of a warlike game, in which women and ecclesiastics can have nothing to do.

[y] There are many good points to be learned from chéfs. It gives an habit of attention and thinking, of foresight, of circumspection, of caution, and not being discouraged at apparent ill-fortune; since great prudence on one side, or an oversight on the other, may make a wonderful change in the issue of the game.

“There is not perhaps in the whole moral world, a more curious or a more instructive subject of speculation, than that men should find the highest degree of entertainment in an intense application of the mind to diverse games that require deep reflection. As the nature of the mind consists in thinking, it seeks for some subject of attention and some object of hope, with a longing not unlike the craving of thirst and hunger; for what meat and drink is to the body, that attention and hope are to the soul. Where these are wanting, the mind cannot be at ease, but sinks down in languor, melancholy, and despair. But the same intension of thought, to which in games we submit with pleasure, in other cases, even when followed by emoluments and rewards, is not always unattended with a degree of irksomeness and pain. The same youth, who will voluntarily spend the day and night in the thoughtful game of chéfs, would willingly avoid the study of mathematics, if he were not impelled by motives of fear, or shame, or reputation. In play the natural disposition to exercise our mental faculties is heightened by a desire of victory, and enflamed by a mixture of social sympathy and opposition. In games too, the reward, whatever it be, is received on the spot: and in all cases it is the nature of the mind to make great allowance for prompt payment.”—Twiss’s Chéfs, Vol. I. p. 125.

[z] Amongst a number of distinguished characters mentioned by writers on chéfs, as addicted to this game, the following are a few.—Charlemagne—Tamerlane—William the Conqueror—the emperor Charles Vth—Henry IVth of France—Charles XIIth of Sweden—Lewis XIVth—William IIIrd of England—Frederick late king of Prussia, &c. &c.

For a full account of every thing relative to the history of chéfs, the reader may consult Hyde De Ludis Orientalibus;—and also two small volumes entitled “Chéfs,” printed for Robinson 1787 and 1789.

Having

Having traced the antiquity of the three principal modes of gambling, and having discovered the difference between their primitive use and modern abuse, a brief notice shall be taken respecting the countenance that has been given to them in England.—In regard to horse-racing, the greatest public encouragement having been given to it in this kingdom, under the notion of improving the breed of horses, it has in consequence been productive of so much gambling iniquity, as to make many restrictions necessary to be laid on its practice. Indeed the “*fort*” of horses produced by these means are so “*useless*,” unless on the turf and to serve the purposes of gambling, that government perhaps would do well to recommend the diverting of “*king’s plates*” into some different channel; to encourage for instance the “*number*” of horses bred rather than to set an exclusive value on their swiftness. By which means also all public and legislative countenance (a point of material weight) would be withdrawn from those meetings of jockeys, which tend to no other purpose than to exhibit an uniform scene of fraud, iniquity and gambling. Would not this be preferable to first holding out a temptation (as is done also by lotteries) and then finding a necessity of making restrictions and [A] appointing punishments for those, who yield to its evil consequences?

The use of dice was probably brought into this island by the Romans (if not known before), was increased in the times of our Saxon ancestry, confirmed by the Norman conquerors, and has prevailed with unimpaired vigour from those days to our own.

The introduction of cards is of much later date; not till near the end of the fourteenth century. But these engines of mixed pleasure and destruction must have soon made their way among our countrymen, from the great intercourse that subsisted between England and France, about the time of the first introduction of cards into the latter kingdom. If the din of arms in the reign of our fifth Henry be objected, as unfavourable to the imitation of an enemy’s private diversions, it must also be remembered, that France was at that period under the dominion of England, that the English lived much in that country,

[A] See Acts of Parliament concerning Horse-racing collected in a little book called “*The Laws of Gaming*,” printed by Woodfall and Strahan 1764.—In the preface to this book are some curious remarks on the swiftness of horses.

and consequently joined in the amusements of the private hour, as well as in the public dangers of the field. However one would have thought, that in such a tumultuous reign at home, as that of our sixth Henry, there could not have been so much use made of cards, as to have rendered them an object of public attention or control. But a record appears in the beginning of Edward IV.'s reign, after the depression of the unfortunate Henry, by which "playing cards are forbidden [B] to be imported." This might probably check their use for a time, till Spanish connexions renewed an acquaintance with cards and a love for them. The union, which was effected by the marriage of prince Arthur with the infanta Catherine of Arragon, brought on an intimacy between the two nations, which probably gave occasion to the increase of card-playing in England; it being a diversion to which the Spaniards were extremely [C] addicted at this period. Cards were certainly much in use, and all ideas concerning them very familiar to the minds of the English, in the reign of Henry VIII. as may be collected from a sermon [D] of the good bishop Latimer. The habit of card-playing also must have been much confirmed and enlarged by the marriage of Philip of Spain with our queen Mary, whose numerous and splendid retinue could not but bring with them that passionate love of cards, which prevailed in the Spanish court. It seems probable also, that the cards then used (whatever they might have been before) were of Spanish form and figure, in compliment to the imperious Philip; since even to this day the names of two Spanish

[B] Anno tertio Edvardi quarti (1463)—Statute concerning certain merchandises not lawful to be brought ready wrought (or made) into the realm. Among a number of other things excluded are "dice, tennis-balls, chessmen, playing cards."—See Statutes at Large, Folio, Vol. I.

[C] This marriage was completed after seven years negotiation in 1501.—See more about Spanish gaming in the former part of this chapter.

[D] "John Fox tells of a sermon preached by Latimer in St. Edward's church, Cambridge, the Sunday before Christmas-day 1527, in which he "dealt" out an exposition of the precepts of christianity. "Now ye have heard what is meant (says he) by this "first card," and how you ought to "play" with it, I purpose again to "deal" unto you "another card almost of the same suit;" for "they be of so nigh affinity, that one cannot be well played without the other, &c." It seems (adds Fuller) he suited his sermon rather to the "time" (being about Christmas, when cards were much used) than to the "text;" which text was the baptist's question to our Lord—"who art thou?"—taking thereby occasion to conform his discourse to the "playing at cards," making the "heart triumph." This blunt preaching was in those days admirably effectual, which would be justly ridiculous

Spanish suits [E] are retained on English cards, though without any reference to their present figure. The love of card-playing was continued [F] through the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. in the latter of whose reigns it had arrived at so high a pitch, that the audiences used to amuse themselves with cards at the playhouse, while they were waiting for the beginning [G] of the play.—There is

ious in ours. I remember (Fuller proceeds) in my time (viz. about the middle of the seventeenth century) a country minister preached at St. Mary's from Rom. xii. 3.—“as God has “dealt” to every man the measure of faith.” In a fond imitation of Latimer's sermon he prosecuted the metaphor of “dealing;”—that men should “play above-board;” that is, avoid all dissimbling; should not “pocket cards,” but improve their gifts and graces; should “follow suit,” that is, wear the surplice, &c.—all which produced nothing but laughter in the audience. Thus the same actions by several persons at several times are made not the same actions, yea differenced from commendable discretion to ridiculous absurdity. And thus he will make but bad music, who hath the “instruments and fiddlestick,” but none of the “refin” of Mr. Latimer.”——See FULLER's Church History in the part entitled Hist. of the University of Cambridge.

[E] Thus we call one suit “Spades” from the Spanish “Espada,” though we retain no similitude of the sword in the figure; and another “Clubs” (or “Bastos”) following the Spaniards, but without regard to the figure also.

[F] “There is an old picture in the possession of the earl of Exeter, in which the lord treasurer Burleigh and two other courtiers are playing at Primero with cards.”——BARRINGTON on Antiquity of Card-playing in Archæologia, Vol. VIII.

Sir John Harrington also about this period wrote a Treatise on Play, in which he warmly censures its great excess.

[G] Dr. Moore mentions a custom rather more extraordinary as now existing at Florence. “I never was more surprised (says he) than when it was proposed to me to make one of a whist-party in a box, which seemed to have been made for the purpose, with a little table in the middle. I hinted, that it would be full as convenient to have a party somewhere else; but I was told, that good music added greatly to the pleasure of a whist-party; that it increased the joy of good fortune and soothed the affliction of bad. As I thought the people of this country better acquainted than myself with the powers of music, I contested the point no longer, but have generally played two or three rubbers at whist in the stage-box every opera night.”——MOORE's Travels through Italy, Vol. II. L. 73. from Florence.

“The Basilicon Doron, written by king James the First, contains in three books, “His Majesty's instructions to his dearest sonne and natural successeur, Henry the prince.” It is to be found in a folio, printed in 1616, entitled, “The works of the most high and mighty prince James, by the grace of God, king of Great Britain” &c. Published by the bishop of Winton, and dedicated “to the thrice illustrious and most excellent prince Charles, the only sonne of our soveraign lord the king.” The whole work is comprised in fifty pages; the first book is, “Of a king's christian duetie towards
“God;”

is no reason to suppose the fondness for this diversion decreased, except during the short "trump or triumph of the fanatic suit;" when undoubtedly cards would be styled "the devil's books." We find indeed, that they had become an engine of much fraud and destruction at this time; and accordingly an act of parliament was passed in Charles II's reign, levying large penalties on those, who should use them to fraudulent purposes. From this time the legislature seems to have had a watchful eye over this (among other) species of gambling-diversion, as far as enacting laws against its abuse will go:—but while the spirit of "impartial" execution is wanting, and the law-makers are not ashamed to become the greatest law-breakers in this respect, the evil reaches beyond the re-

"God;" the second, "of a king's dutie in his office;" and the third, "of a king's behaviour in indifferent things." From this last I shall quote the whole passage, which contains his majesty's opinion of games. "And as for sitting house-pastimes, wherewith men by driving time, spur a free and fast-yenough running horse, (as the proverb is) although they are not profitable for the exercise either of minde or body, yet can I not utterly condemne them; since they may at times supply the roome, which being emptie, would be patent to pernicious idlenesse, quia nihil potest esse vacuum. I will not therefore agree with the curiositie of some learned men in our age, in forbidding cardes, dice, and other such like games of hazard; although otherwayes surely I reverence them as notable and godly men: for they are deceived therein, in founding their argument upon a mistaken ground, which is, that the playing at such games, is a kind of casting of lot, and therefore unlawful; wherein they deceive themselves: for the casting of lot was used for triall of the trewth in any obscure thing, that otherwayes could not be gotten cleared; and therefore was a sort of prophecy: where by the contrary, no man goeth to any of these playes, to cleare any obscure trewth, but only to gage so much of his owne money, as hee pleaseth, upon the hazard of the running of the cardes or dice, as well as he would doe upon the speede of a horse or dog, or any such like gaigeour: and so, if they be unlawful, all gaigeours upon uncertainties must likewayes be condemned: not that thereby I take the defence of vaine carders and dicers, that waste their moyen, and their time (whereof fewe consider the pretiousefneffe) upon prodigall and continual playing: no, I would rather allow it to be discharged, where such corruption cannot be eschewed. But only I cannot condemne you at sometimes, when ye have no other adoe (as a good king will be seldome) and are wearie of reading, or evill-disposed in your person, and when it is foule and stormie weather; then, I say, may ye lawfully play at the cardes or tables; for as to dicing, I thinke it becommeth best deboshed souldiers to play at, on the head of their drums, being only ruled by hazard and subject to knavish cogging.—And as for the chesse, I think it over fond, because it is overwise and philosophicke a folly: for where all such light playes are ordained to free mens heads for a time, from the fashious thoughts on their affaires; it by the contrarie filleth and troubleth mens heades, with as many fashious toyes of the play, as before it was filled with thoughts on his affaires."—See *Twiss's Chets*, Vol. I. P. 133.

medy of legal prohibition ; since the rage [H] of gaming with all its iniquity and destruction will defy the menaces [I] of statutes unenforced against capital offenders.

[H] In the debate on opening the budget 1776, Lord North (Chancellor of the Exchequer) said, on a proposed additional tax on cards and dice, " that 164,000 packs of cards had been stamped in 1775, " which amounted to between three and four thousand pounds, (exclusive of collection-expences). " Another sixpenny stamp would produce a like sum ; and an additional half-crown stamp on dice " about 400l. and both taken together upwards of 4000l."—See Parliamentary Register, 8vo. Almon, 1776, Vol. III. 480.

There must then be at least 3200 pair of dice stamped to produce 400l. at 2s. 6d. additional stamp. Wherefore the whole number of cards and dice stamped in 1775 was above 167,200. Beside which the number of both smuggled, or which pay no duty, is great.

In Mr. Pitt's ways and means for 1789, nine thousand pounds were to be raised by an additional duty of sixpence on cards and dice : consequently there must have been no less than 360,000 cards and dice stamped in the year 1788 to justify the calculation. A proof, that gaming in England is not on the decline. The whole duty on cards is now two shillings per pack, and on dice thirteen shillings per pair.

The propensity to gaming is also evident from the number of metaphorical expressions in every language taken from gaming. Take the few following examples in our own. " He has played his cards well or ill"—applied to the management of his fortune or interest. " The die is cast"—all is over with him. " He has run his race—reached the goal"—finished his course, or obtained his point. " A lucky throw or hit"—a favourable circumstance or event. " Within an ace"—meaning one point of gaining a thing. " He hazards every thing"—risks all. " Chances are for, or against"—in any pursuit. " He was piqued"—or angry at losing such a thing (from the game piquet). " Left in the lurch"—under circumstances unexpected and peculiarly unfavourable (from a French game called L'Ourche, wherein on certain points happening the stake is to be paid double). " A blot is hit"—in a character (from backgammon). " Checked in his career"—stopt short in his designs (from chess). " To save your bacon or gamon" (from backgammon). Of this last take the following account from Hyde in his part " De aliquot vocabulis lusoriis." A certain portion of the hog is called in Italian " gambone ;" from whence we may have our English " gambon or gammon" for the same part. Confounding which, many think " gamon" in the play has the same meaning ; and therefore they say " he saved his gamon or bacon" (into which this part of the hog is usually made). Whereas " backgammon" seems derived from the nature of the play itself " back-game-on ;" that is, when one of your men is taken, you must " go back—begin again—and then game on."

[I] See a collection of these laws and cases on them in the volume before-mentioned entitled " Laws against Gaming, Horse-racing, &c." inscribed to the members of the Jockey Club. Printed by Woodfall and Strahan, 1764.

C H A P. IV.

THE SHARPER DESCRIBED. NEWMARKET THE EMPORIUM OF GAMBLING.

C O N T E N T S.

No real difference in the characters of professed gamblers.—Plunder their sole aim.—Degrees of guilt in gaming, as well as in other vices.—Gambling, though similar in its effects, yet may be diversified in its progress, according to the rank and situation of its votary.—The sharper described: totally callous to all feelings of humanity.—Refined ages never the most virtuous.—Hence easy admission of sharpers into polite assemblies.—Cool and temperate themselves sharpers promote vice and dissipation in others, to lead the young and unexperienced into their snares.—The earnestness with which they pursue their iniquitous business.—Encouragements they give to, and frauds they practise on, their dupes.—The use they make of modern ideas of honour.—Their villainy compared with that of the usurer; joint-partners in iniquity.—No princely fortune able to stand against their coalition.—The sharper generally a ruined man himself before he practises on others.—His own gains unstable.—Certain of one important loss,—Heaven.—Newmarket a fruitful field for the display of gambling abilities.—Cock-fighting.—Turf-fame highly coveted.—Jockeys described.—The vicinity of Newmarket to one of our Universities much to be lamented.—Hence youths of distinction early initiated into the pursuits of the turf and mysteries of gambling.—The race begun.—The betting-post.—Description of a Bett.—Losses on the turf attempted to be repaired at the gambling table.—Pandæmonium (or little hell, as it is called at Newmarket,) described.—Newmarket the ruin of princely fortunes and virtuous principles.

HAVING ascertained the general propensity to gambling, together with the similar effects of its excess in all nations, it will be sufficient to confine the subsequent remarks to domestic experience; and inquiry shall now be made into the views and characters of those, who are immoderately addicted to gambling. There can indeed be no real diversity in the character of a professed
gamester

[K] gamester; since his sole aim and delight is profit and plunder, which are points he pursues with a steady uniformity. But it is not meant to be asserted, that all, who surround the black table of destruction, are equally hardened, or actuated by the same spirit of fraud and chicanery. There are degrees of guilt in gaming, as well as in other vices; and though, where anxiously and unremittingly pursued, it compasses at length the same ruinous and deadly end, yet it will be varied in its progress according to the different rank, sex, and situation of its votary. All are not equally, or at once, or any without large previous sacrifices, initiated into the private mysteries of the great goddess of hazard, or permitted to assist officially at the altar of the spotted divinity. There are ignorant dupes, as well as masters of treachery, surrounders of the gambling board

“ who run,
[L] Some to undo, and some to be undone.”

Let it be the first business then to consign to public infamy such impostors and grand deceivers, as live by the practice [M] of fraud, and who rise upon the ruins of unwary innocence. Deaf to every call of humanity, and with every sense locked up in callous indifference, these sons of gambling iniquity neither hear, nor see, like other people, nor are known to feel a single pang for the victims of their spoil and rapacity. Steele as they are against every liberal sentiment and humane impression, no distress of an innocent family, brought to ruin through their means, can pierce their hearts of adamant. Let the beacon of detestation then be brightly illuminated against such sordid and selfish characters; that when the shoals are pointed out, on which so many rich vessels have been stranded, and when the foundered wrecks themselves lie floating on the surface, other barks may be admonished to steer clear of the danger, and not to split on the same rocks of ruin and destruction.

[K] “ The sharp, the black legs, and the knowing one,
Livery or lace the self-same circle run.
The same the passion, end and means the same,
Dick and his lordship differ but in name.”

The Gamblers, a Poem, 2 Cantos, Anon. 1777.

[L] DENHAM's Cooper's-Hill.

[M] *Fraus vulpeculæ, vis leonis, utrumque alienissimum ab homine, sed fraus odio digna majore.*
Cyc. de Off.

It is a melancholy truth, but confirmed by the history of all nations, that the most polite and refined age of a kingdom is never the most virtuous. The frank and manly deportment, which scorns to cringe and flatter, the conscious dignity of worth, the solid substance of sincerity and virtuous manners, are apt to be frittered into the refinements of elegance, into the courtly ease and versatility of compliment. Hence distinctions [N] of personal merit being but little regarded, there needs but to support a certain figure [O] in life, to be conversant in a few etiquettes of good breeding and sentiments of modern honour, in order to be received with affability and courteous attention in the circle of polite intercourse. But having once gained admission, nothing forms a greater cement of union than the spirit of high [P] gaming. There being so little cognizance taken of the good qualities of the heart in fashionable assemblies, no wonder that amid the medley of characters to be found in these places, the " sharper" of polite address should gain too easy admission. This fraternity of artists, whether they are to be denominated rooks [Q], sharpers, black-legs, are exceedingly numerous, and are dispersed among all ranks of people; so that notwithstanding the very fashionable species of merchandise, in which they deal, it is to be feared, that the market must at length be overstocked with adventurers;

[N] "Inter bonos et malos nullum discrimen."——Cato in Sallust.

"Protinus ad censum, de moribus ultima fiet
Questio."——Juv. Sat. 3.

[O] "Fret not thyself, thou man of modern song,
Nor violate the plaister of thy hair;
Nor to that dainty coat do aught of wrong;
Else, how shalt thou to Cesar's hall repair?
For ah no damag'd coat can enter there!"——BEATTIE'S Minstrel, Part I.

[P] It was the same at Rome at the end of the fourth century, as Gibbon quotes from Ammianus Marcellinus. See GIBBON'S Rom. Hist. Vol. V. P. 275. 8vo. "Another method of introduction into the houses and society of the "great," is derived from the profession of gaming; or as it is "more politely styled,—of play. The confederates are united by a strict and indissoluble bond of "friendship, or rather of conspiracy; a superior degree of skill in the "tesserarian" art, is a sure road "to wealth and reputation. A master of that sublime science, who in a supper or assembly, is placed "below a magistrate, displays in his countenance the surprise and indignation, which Cato might be "supposed to feel, when he was refused the prætorship by the votes of a capricious people."

[Q] Sharpers are called rooks, because it is said of those birds, that they are famous for stealing materials out of other birds' nests to build their own.

and that these vultures will scarce find carcasses to satisfy their craving appetites. The follies and vices of others, of open-hearted youth in particular, are the great game or pursuit of this odious crew. Though cool and dispassionate themselves, they do all in their power to throw others off their guard, that they may make their advantages of them: though maintainers of sobriety and temperance [R] in their own persons for obvious reasons, yet they are ready to promote excess of all kinds in others, as well knowing, how dissipation tends to stifle every liberal and generous sentiment, to discard every useful and honourable occupation, and thus to prepare their victim (bewildered in the paths of vice and idleness) for suffering all the frauds and horrors of the gaming-table.

As profit, not pleasure, is the aim of these knights of darkness, they lie concealed under all shapes and disguises, and follow up their game with all wariness and discretion. Like wise traders they make it the business of their lives to excel in their calling. For this end they study the secret mysteries [S] of their art by night and by day; they improve on the scientific schemes of their [T] profound

[R] "That vegetable diet is favourable to the exertions of the mind is proved in practical instances. Gamesters, whose minds must be always on the watch to take advantages, and prepared to form calculations, and to employ the memory, constantly avoid a full meal of animal food; which they find incapacitates them for play nearly as much as a quantity of strong liquor would have done; for which reason they feed chiefly on milk and vegetables."—FALCONER, on Influence of Climate, B. V. C. i.

[S] "Tyme spent in learning to cheat ys not small; yf it can be done sufficiently without the helpe of the devill. For whom should the devill assyst, but such as labor and study night and day in his service? Thearfore let them not call yt theyr playe, but theyr labour, theyr trade, theyr occupayon, that playe only for gayne."—HARRINGTON'S Treatise on Playe, published in *Nugæ Antiquæ*.

[T] "Come thou great father of the shuffling crew!
 Blest spirit come, the betting work renew.
 Whether with beauteous Proserpine you sport,
 A favoured guest in Pluto's gloomy court;
 Or give to whist the law, in dice delight,
 Or cut by day, or calculate by night;
 Or quitting crowds a wandering shadow dwell,
 In meads of amaranth and asphodel——
 Blest spirit! leave a while each meaner care,
 And to * Augusta's once-lov'd scenes repair.

* London.

profound master, and on his deep doctrines and calculations of chances; they become skilful without a rival, where skill is necessary, and fraudulent without conscience, where fraud is safe and advantageous: and while fortune or chance appears to direct every thing, they practise numberless devices, by which they ensure her ultimate favours to themselves. Of these none is more efficacious, because none is more insnaring, than bribing their young and artless dupe to future play by suffering him to win at their first onsets. By rising a winner he imbibes a confidence in his own gambling abilities, or deems himself a favourite of fortune. He engages again, and is again successful; which increases his exultation and confirms his future attendance: and thus does the simple gudgeon swallow their bait, till it becomes at length fast hooked. Unfortunate therefore (however it may seem a contradiction in terms) is good fortune to the young and unexperienced gamester! since it gives him golden dreams of imaginary wealth; and encourages, insnares, and lulls him into a fatal security. Whereas losses at first setting out might have opened his eyes and probably have taught him a degree of wisdom; since wise must those gamesters be deemed, who can have resolution to retire with the loss of "half" their fortunes. For these Parthian-like antagonists only retreat a while under seeming disadvantages to return again and strike the furer blow. When secure of their prey they begin to level their whole train of artillery against the boasted [u] honours of his short-lived triumph. Then the extensive manours, the ancient forests, the paternal mansions begin to tremble for their future destiny. The pigeon is marked down, and the infernal crew begin in good earnest to pluck his rich plumage. The wink is given on his appearance in the room, as the signal of

Studious of thee I waste the midnight oil,
I shun no penance and I spare no toil:
Studious of thee I trim the morning lamp,
No fears invade me and no dangers damp."

Address to Hoyle in "the Gamblers," Anon. 1777.

But according to an old and true adage, "Aleator, quantum in arte est melior, tantò nequior."
"Better gamester, worse man."

[u] "O thoughtless mortal ever blind to fate!
Too soon dejected and too soon elate!
Sudden these honours shall be snatch'd away,
And curs'd for ever the victorious day."—POPE's Rape of the Lock, 3.

commencing their covert attacks. The shrug, the nod, the hem—every motion of the eyes, hands, feet—every air and gesture, look and word—becomes an expressive, though disguised language of fraud and cozenage, being big with deceit and swollen with ruin. Besides this the card is marked, or slipped, or covered [x], or packed, or cut, or swallowed [y], to the destruction of the simple one, who is inadvertently drawn into all the perplexities and labyrinths of odds, calculations, and bettings. With wily craft the sharpers substitute their deceitful [z] doctors, and thus crabs become the portion of the losing flats. The [A] stamp, the dribble, and the gallery, all afford room for scientific fraud, and are used, as occasion requires, to pick the transient rouleaux out of the pockets of inexperience. Thus does the deadly arrow pierce the side of every thoughtless youth, who engages with the sharpening crew. These leeches suck his heart's blood, and quit not their hold, whilst a drop remains to gorge their thirsty maws. A brave soldier may as well expect, that his courage alone will support him against the explosion of a mine beneath him; or the pilot of a crazy bark

[x] The story is well known of a noted sharper of distinction (a foreigner) whose hand was thrust through with a fork by his adversary, and thus nailed to the table, with this cool expression of concern, "I ask your pardon, Sir, if you have not the knave of clubs under your hand."

[y] A card has been ate between two slices of bread and butter, for the purpose of concealment.

[z] False dice are called "Doctors;" a losing game "Crabs;" and those who are duped or taken in "Flats," in the gaming vocabulary.—The "Rouleau" is any number of guineas wrapt up in paper, and given about from one adventurer to another, as he loses or wins. "(Moses.) If by your assistance I could get into de Boodle's, de Almack's, or one of the clubs. (Mrs. Fleece'em.) Bless me! is it possible you are not a member? (Moses.) I was often put up; but they always give me de black ball. (Mrs. Fleece'em.) Why? (Moses.) I do not know; perhaps my religion was de objection. (Mrs. F.) I should hardly think them so squeamish as that:—the dice are indeed often called "Doctors;" but by the large evacuations they cause, I should rather think them graduates of physic than divinity."—FOOTE'S COZENERS.

[A] These are different manners of throwing the dice. The "Stamp" is, when the caster with an elastic spring of the wrist raps the cornet or box with vehemence on the table, the dice as yet not appearing from under the box. The "Dribble" is, when with an easy, but ingenious motion, the caster pours, as it were, the dice on the abacus or black board; when if he chance to have been a long practitioner, he may suddenly cog with his fore-finger one of the cubes. "The Long gallery" is, when the dice are flung or hurled the whole length of the board.—The author would be extremely sorry to have it thought, that his own experience gained him the above knowledge in gambling terms:—he therefore craves the indulgence of the poet—*Sit mihi fas "audita" loqui.*

bid

bid defiance to the violence of the storm by his nautical skill, as an unexperienced and artless gambler look for final success (or rather for delivery from final ruin) amid the veteran practitioners of cards, dice, and chicanery :—but

“ Is there not some chosen curse,
Some hidden thunder in the stores of heaven,
Red with uncommon wrath to blast the man,
Who owes his riches to “ another’s” ruin ?”

Though the sharper has long consigned all feelings of true honour and conscience to oblivion in his breast, yet the former word is of great use to him in his depredations on others. By the laws of God or man he can neither justify nor recover a large [B] game-debt : but, a false, though prevailing notion of honour steps in to his aid, and all is secure. The honest tradesman may starve, the possessions be alienated, the family distressed, the loser ruined, and left to go mad, turn highwayman, or shoot himself, without any solicitude on the part of his former associates :—he has nothing left to be despoiled of, and so ends their connexion.—But how must they be hardened [c] in iniquity, who can pursue such a course of destructive villainy without remorse ! Are not sharpeners equally detestable, if not worse members of society than their partners in the spoil, the practitioners of usury ; since the latter only take advantage of that distress, into which the former voluntarily plunge the dupes of their treacherous dealings ?—The palm of villainy perhaps is the sharper’s due, though a greater degree of contempt and odium generally falls to the share of the usurer. The latter is probably excluded by his walk in life from fashionable association or being the “ polite” pickpocket ; and consequently the whole abuse is vented on the advancer of the usurious loan, when half only is at most his due. However, as the success of the sharper depends on a sort of reputed honour, and

[B] See several acts of parliament passed in the reigns of Anne and George II. against the recovery of game-debts.

[c] It is told of a Sir William Colepepper, (see a note in Pope’s *Moral Essays*, III.) that after he had been ruined himself at the gaming-table, his whole delight was to sit there and see others ruined—hardened wretch,

“ Who, though he plays no more, o’erlooks the cards,”
with this diabolical disposition !

that of the usurer on his golden heaps alone, the latter gladly suffers every prostitution of character for the sake of promoting that interest, in which they are so closely connected; and no doubt they cordially unite in their hours of relaxation, in toasting "success to usury and gaming."—How wretched the youth, who falls into such a double vortex of ruin! soon must the vitals of his property be consumed; soon must the ancient castles be blown into the air; soon must the groves and forests be stripped of their venerable shade, and the stately oaks lie prostrate on the ground: for what even princely fortune can withstand such a coalition of fraud [D] and villainy!

The pernicious effects of gaming were probably first felt by the sharper himself, and he was a ruined man before he meditated the ruin of others. Whilst in the zenith of his present success "his" indeed is the subsistence, the gain, and temporary affluence; the destruction is transferred to others. But after a time distrust and suspicion is awakened against him; his artifices and disguises are laid open, his fine spun schemes fail of their effects, and either he becomes his own dupe or is outwitted by others. So that, upon the whole, even the sharper's riches of the night fly away on the wings of the morning, and a black swan is scarce a greater prodigy in nature than the steady wealth of an artful gambler. But in whatever state the sharper may find his pecuniary resources, yet by his various frauds and impieties, by his total forgetfulness of his Maker (except in the course of his horrid imprecations and blasphemies), by his uncharitableness towards his neighbour and delight in his ruin, he is sure to suffer one important and irrecoverable loss, and that is "heaven." But how to win heaven never came within the compass of the gamester's calculations and chances.—

[D] "(Transfer.) To save time I had better mention his terms.—Five per cent. legal interest: ten the premium. Then as you are not of age, Sir George, five more for ensuring life. As for what he will demand for risk? (Sir George) He shall be satisfied. (Transfer.) You pay the attorney. (Sir George.) Amply, amply. Loader, despatch him. (Loader.) There, there, little Transfer, now every thing is settled; all terms shall be complied with, reasonable and unreasonable. (Transfer.) I had forgot one thing—I am not the principal—You pay the brokerage. (Loader.) Aye, aye, a handsome present into the bargain never fear. (Transfer.) Enough, enough."——
FOOTE'S Minor.

" Religion,

“ Religion, morals, virtue, all give way,
 And conscience dies, the prostitute of play.
 Eternity ne’er steals one thought between,
 Till suicide completes the fatal scene.” [E]

But though characters of the above iniquitous description abound in every place, where there is a prospect of rich spoil, yet there is one spot more eminently distinguished for a general rendezvous of fraud and gambling; and that is, “Newmarket.” The diversions of these plains are a decoy to many a noble and ingenuous mind, which is caught in the snares that are here laid to entrap youth and inexperience. Newmarket is a wily labyrinth of loss and gain, a fruitful field for the display of gambling abilities. Newmarket is the school of the sharpening crew; the unfathomable gulph which absorbs princely fortunes.—The amusements of the turf are in all other places intermixed with a variety of other social diversions, which are calculated to promote innocent mirth and gaiety. The breakfastings, the concerts, the plays, the assemblies, attract the circle of female beauty, variegate and enliven the scene, employ the gentlemen in a variety of attentions, and thus prevent much of the evil contagion and destruction of midnight play. But encouragement of the gambler is the very charter of Newmarket. Every object that meets the eye is encompassed with gambling; every hour of the day and night is beset with gambling diversified; in short gambling must occupy the whole man, or he is lost to the sport and spirit of the place. The inhumanity of the cock-pit, the iniquitous vortex of the hazard-table employ each leisure moment from the race, and either swallow up the emoluments of the victorious field, or sink the jockey still deeper in the gulph of ruin.—The common people of England have been characterized (and

[E] The Gamblers.

“ Cheating at playe breaks at least halfe the commandments of the old and new law.—The ten Commandments are plain and open. Doth the cozening gamester keep them? “Thou shalt not covet” is the laste and least of them. Let hym bee pardoned for breaking that. But yf he bee (as St. Pawle calls yt) an idolloter with hys covetownesnes; yf he swear and forswear, break sabbaths, dishonor parents, and magistrates, murder wyth mallys, steale from all hee playes wyth (for yt ys worse than theft); witnes falsehood wyth others, all whych the worlde sees that the cosening gamesters daylie do, then yt ys too plaine, that they break nyne of the commandments; and (when inclination leads towards a breach of the remaining one,) I dare be sworn, that hee that breaks nyne of them, will keep none of them.”——HARRINGTON’s Treatise on Play in Nugæ Antiquæ.

perhaps

perhaps too justly) for their love of bloody sports and cruel diversions; for their taking but little delight in viewing the innocent gambols and carefing plays of animals, but in running eagerly and in crowds to see them wound and worry one another. Cock-throwing, bull-baiting, boxing, and the crowded attendance on executions, are but too many proofs of this sanguinary turn. But why the imputation should lie at the door of the vulgar alone, may be a matter of doubt; for while the star of nobility and dignified distinction is seen to glitter at a cock-match or on a boxing-stage; where its proprietor is liable to be elbowed by their highnesses of grease and foot, and to be hemmed in by knights of the post and candidates for Tyburn-tree; when this motley group alike are fixed in eager attention, alike [E] bett on and enjoy each blood-drawing stroke of the artificial spur, or blow of the fist well laid in—what distinction is to be made between peer and plebeian, except in derogation of the former! What a dismal degradation this of the ermined robe! what an humiliation of its wearer, when he can take pleasure in countenancing by his presence the inhumanity of the cock-pit [F], or seek to render fashionable the cruel diversions of the old bear-garden.

But

[E] “Betts pour apace;—an even twenty here
 A gambling feeder stakes;—what gambling peer
 A feeder can refuse? what prince withstand
 A flattering fifty at a butcher’s hand?”

—————“And now the stops of death they count,
 Ten fatal tens swell slow the black amount.”

N. B. “When a cock falls in battle, the friends of the adverse cock count an hundred; and if the cock so fallen rise not within that time, he is accounted dead in cock-pit law.”—The Gamblers.

See Hogarth’s excellent moral print of the cock-pit.

The author does not know, how many minutes are allowed by boxing-law for the prostrate champion to rise and renew the grim and horrid fight; but supposes these are accurately settled by the amateurs of that inhuman science.

[F] “One cannot but regret, that a creature so useful and noble as the cock, should be so enormously abused by us. It is true, the massacre of Shrove-Tuesday seems in a declining way, and in a few years, it is to be hoped, will be totally disused; but the cock-pit still continues a reproach to the humanity of Englishmen. It is unknown to me, when the pitched battle first entered England; but it was probably brought hither by the Romans. The bird was here before Cæsar’s arrival; but no notice of his fighting has occurred to me earlier than the time of William Fitz-Stephen, who wrote the life of Archbishop Becket some time in the reign of Henry II.—William describes the cocking, as the sport of school-boys on Shrove-Tuesday. “Præterea quotannis die, quæ dicitur Carnilevaria (ut

But let us hasten to the race-ground in company with a rare assemblage of grooms [G], gamblers, and greatness. For Newmarket fame is an object of ambition [H] sought by the most distinguished personages; whose studs and

a puerorum Londoniz ludis incipiamus, omnes enim pueri fuimus) scholarum singuli pueri suos ap-
portant magistro suo gallos gallinaceos pugnaces, et totum illud antemeridianum datur ludo puerorum
vacantium spectare in scholis suorum pugnans gallorum.”—The theatre it seems was their school, and
the master was the controller and director of the sport. From this time at least the diversion, however
absurd, and even impious, was continued amongst us. It was followed, though disapproved and pro-
hibited in the reigns of Edward III. Henry VIII. and Elizabeth. It has been by some, as I remem-
ber, called a royal diversion; and, as every one knows, the cock-pit at Whitehall was erected for the
more magnificent celebration of it. There was another pit in Drury-lane, and another in Jewin-
street. It was prohibited however by one of Oliver’s acts in 1654. What aggravates the reproach
and disgrace upon us Englishmen, are those species of fighting, which are called—“the battle-royal
and the Welsh-main;”—known no where in the world, as I think, but here; neither in China, nor
in Persia, nor in Malacca, nor among the savage tribes of America. These are scenes so bloody, as
almost to be too shocking to relate; and yet as many may not be acquainted with the horrible nature
of them, it may be proper, for the excitement of our aversion and detestation, to describe them in a
few words. In the battle-royal an unlimited number of fowls are pitted; and after they have slaughtered
one another, for the diversion (dii boni!) of the otherwise generous and humane Englishman, the single
surviving bird is to be esteemed the victor, and carries away the prize.—The Welsh-main consists, we
will suppose, of sixteen pair of cocks; of these the sixteen conquerors are pitted a second time; the
eight conquerors of these are pitted a third time; the four conquerors, a fourth time; and lastly the
two conquerors of these are pitted a fifth time: so that (incredible barbarity!) thirty-one cocks are
sure to be most inhumanly murdered for the sport and pleasure, the noise and nonsense, nay I may say,
the profane cursing and swearing of those, who have the effrontery to call themselves with all these
bloody doings, and with all this impiety about them—“Christians.”—PEGGE’S Memoir on Cock-
fighting in Archæologia, Vol. III. 1775.

[G] “See side by side the jockey and Sir John
Discuss the important point of six to one;
For, o my muse, the deep-felt bliss how dear,
How great the pride, to gain a jockey’s ear!”—WARTON’S Newmarket.

[H] “Go on, brave youths, till in some future age,
Whips shall become the senatorial badge;
Till England see her thronging senators
Meet all at Westminster in boots and spurs;
See the whole house with mutual phrensy mad,
Her patriots all in leathern breeches clad;
Of betts for taxes learnedly debate,
And guide with equal reins a steed or state.”—WARTON’S Newmarket.

Quære, how far distant is this age?

whose riders occupy their thoughts, enjoy their company, and engross their conversation. But chiefly is one's heart sickened at the sight of so many young academic attendants on this ruinous scene; as if Newmarket were the spot to search for truth and wisdom. The vicinity of one of our ancient seats of honourable letters to these scenes of destructive gambling is much to be lamented. When pleasure and fashion so warmly attack the heart of youth, where is the fortitude and judgment firm enough to resist the inviting impulse? The genius of improvement may argue, science may open the richest vein of her treasures, prudence may expostulate, and virtue cry aloud—but the neighbouring plains of Newmarket will allure and fascinate beyond them all. Temptation being strong and the powers of resistance weak, what can follow, but obedience to the voice of dissipation!—Besides, the delight of an horse is of early and spontaneous growth in the breast of youth; no wonder then that Newmarket being thus contiguous, jockeys should be deemed the best instructors, and to be master of a fine horse be thought more essential to happiness than to be a master of science.—To view the noblest of animals in his highest perfection, to see his eager alacrity and conscious pride, when preparing for the course, affords a pleasure not to be disputed; while the cheerfulness of the moving picture around exhilarates and enlivens the heart; and many an one certainly enjoys all that is manly and rational in the sport without engaging in any of its attendant vices. But still the vicinity [I] and frequency of the scene with respect to the young academic is replete with danger. It strengthens that natural propensity towards horses, which wants the curb instead of spur; it encourages a love of racing, causes a mixture with [K] low and illiberal society, and insensibly allures to the spirit of gambling. Many a youth, who is now a slave to their destructive excess, might have loved horses, sporting, and racing in moderation, had he not been situated near the contagion of Newmarket-air, which served to confirm and enlarge the early bias of his mind. By an attendance there he has become a perfect connoisseur in horse-flesh, an adept in all the mysteries of odds, calculation, and betting; and in short a perfect “knowing one [L].”

But

[I] ————— mala vicini pecoris contagia lædent.——VIRG.

[K] ————— inter scabiem tantam et contagia.——HOR.

[L] “But (says the elegant Blair, addressing himself to youth in one of his Sermons) consider the employment of this important period, as the highest trust that shall ever be committed to you; as in

But now all is ready for starting. The “sweated” [M] riders appear in spider-like [N] forms and filken [O] attire to be “weighed” for the race. The streamers

a great measure decisive of your happiness in time and in eternity. As in the succession of the seasons, each by the invariable laws of nature affects the productions of what is next in course, so in human life, every period of our age, according as it is well or ill spent, influences the happiness of that which is to follow. Virtuous youth gradually brings forward accomplished and flourishing manhood; and such manhood passes of itself without uneasiness into respectable and tranquil old age. But when nature is turned out of its regular course, disorder takes place in the moral, just as in the vegetable world. If the spring puts forth no blossoms, in summer there will be no beauty, and in autumn no fruit. So if youth be trifled away without improvement, manhood will be contemptible and old age miserable.”

[M] Qui fludet optatam cursu contingere metam
Multa tulit fecitque puer “sudavit” et alit.—HOR.

“Stop, stop old gentleman; I desire to speak a word to you; pray which is the way to ——.”
“I beg, Sir, you would not interrupt me; I am a Newmarket-jockey; am to ride in a few days a match, upon which there is a great deal depending, and I am now “preparing.”—“Oh, I see now you are a young man, instead of that old one for whom I mistook you by your wrappings; but pray explain.”—“Why your honor must know that we jockeys, in order to bring ourselves down to the weight required for the horses we are to ride, sweat under a load of flannel wrapped about us beneath coats and great coats; and walk two or three miles in the heat of summer, till we are ready to faint under our burden.”—“Indeed! why you go through a great deal.”—“Ah, Sir, a great deal indeed! why we sometimes lie hours and hours between two feather-beds, to melt away our extraordinary weight.”—“But will you give me leave to examine your present dress?—Hum:—two flannel waistcoats, a thick cloth coat, and a Bath furtout! It is a vast weight to carry this warm weather, I only wish you do not faint under it.”—“Never fear, Sir, I do not doubt but I shall do very well.”—Newmarket, or Essay on the Turf. Anon. 1771.

—————“with sudorifics sweat thine hide,
And well the “waste”-coat’s weighty warmth provide.
The dunghill’s unctuous hot-bed now prepare,
And sink, and stink, and stew, and stifle there.
Dry all thy juices, get the knowing grin,
And vinegar shall make thee sharp and thin.”—The Gamblers.

[N] “Is this, is this he? What! the same man, who so lately appeared like an old fellow, wrapped up in coats and great coats! It certainly is the same; but what a different figure he makes now! As then he appeared all clothes, he has now on almost no clothes at all. What a thin, slim figure it now is! very much the make of a greyhound,” &c. &c. The author of “Newmarket, or an Essay on the Turf,” then goes on humorously to describe every part of the jockey’s dress, not forgetting the descent of his sceptre or whip through many generations.

[O] “And now in filken panoply arrayed,
(The weights dispos’d and entrance duly paid)

streamers play in the air, while the fleet courfers fly before the [P] wind.—But hark! what discordant sounds are issuing from the “betting-post.” Can business be going forward amid such harsh [Q] jargon, where all tongues are employed at once, and nothing seems to exist but oaths, elbowing, and confusion! where there is neither distinction of character nor subordination of rank! where prince and plebeian, the representatives of majesty and muck-worms, citizens and courtiers, nobility and mobility, senators and sharpers, peers and pick-pockets, scoundrels and statesmen, all unite in the most perfect familiarity. It may be jargon all to the simple and unexperienced, but is only regular [R] confusion to the enlightened and knowing one. The sensations attending a “bett” must needs be delightful; since it so often seems to form the life and spirit of conversation, and to be the most powerful and persuasive of all argu-

Gaunt, meagre, rueful, macerated, pale,
A range of jockeys dangle in a scale.
Each feather of a man, where none subside,
But all mount up in levity allied:
Elate the knowing view, elate admire
Their spindle legs, quaint looks, and strange attire.”——The Gamblers.

[P] *Instat equis auriga suos vincentibus, illum
Præteritum temnens extremos inter euntem.*——HOR.
————— *hunc atque hunc superare laborat.*——HOR.
Occupet extremum scabies.——HOR.

The ingenious and ironical author of “Newmarket, or an Essay on the Turf,” bestows the following titles and honours on the most famous horse of the day, viz. Kelly’s Eclipse. Creations.—“Duke of Newmarket, Marquis of Barnet, Earl of Epsom and York, Viscount Canterbury, Baron Eclipse of Mellay; Lord of Lewes, Salisbury, Ipswich, and Northampton; Comptroller-general of the “race grounds, and Premier Racer of all England.” To bear coat of arms.—“A Pegasus argent on a field verd;—the supporters, two Englishmen in ermined robes and ducal coronets. The crest, “a purse, Or;—the motto—“*volat ocior euro.*”

[Q] ————— “a thousand tongues
Jabber harsh jargon from a thousand lungs.
—————
Dire was the din! as when in caverns pent,
Hoarse Boreas storms and Eurus works for vent,
The Æolian brethren heave the labouring earth,
And roar with elemental strife for birth.”——The Gamblers.
Tanto cum strepitu ludi spectantur.——HOR.

[R] *Concordia discors.*——HOR.

ments.

ments. It is a logic more convincing than Aristotle's, more general in its premises, and decisive in its conclusions. Whether the matter be trifling or important, grave or ludicrous, whimsical or inhuman, it is equally subject to the powers of betting; and a fleet courser or a jack-ass, a dying bird or a fat [s] maggot, an apoplectic [r] waiter or a straw's length, can give rise to a bett, and convey away thousands with extraordinary despatch.

But if the betts on the turf should have proved unsuccessful, there still remains a chance of recovery, or of double ruin, at the midnight hour of play. Hazard or cards allure the unsuccessful on the race ground with the hopes of better fortune, as well as flatter the winner with expectations of further gains. They both therefore hasten with eager step to "Pandæmonium," where the infernal council is now assembled, and exhibits a curious oglio of lords, jockeys, scavoir-vivres, feeders, pickpockets, rooks [u], gamblers, and black-legs. But the stage grows warm and shocking to humanity. The parties concerned are distracted with frantic and outrageous passions; while fraud and villainy, im-

[s] "A few days ago as some sprigs of nobility were dining together at a tavern, they took the following sensible conceit into their heads after dinner. One of them observing a maggot come from a filberd which seemed to be uncommonly large, attempted to get it from his companion, who not choosing to let it go was immediately offered five guineas for it, which was accepted. He then proposed to run it against any other two maggots, that could be produced at table. Matches were accordingly made, and these poor reptiles were the means of five hundred pounds being won and lost in a few minutes."—Oxford Magazine, Vol. V.

Was not this a maggot indeed!

[r] The following story has been asserted for truth; but if so, must for humanity's sake be imputed to the fumes of inebriation.—A waiter at a tavern in Westminster, being engaged in attendance on some young men of distinction, suddenly fell down in a fit. Betts were immediately proposed by some of the most thoughtless on his recovery and accepted by others. The more humane part of the company were for sending immediately for medical assistance; but this was over-ruled; since by the tenor of the betts, he was "to be left to himself:"—and he died accordingly.

[u] It is to be hoped, that the right honourable members of the jockey-club, and others of less honourable views, will not be offended at the word "pandæmonium," or epithet "infernal;" as the author understands the common name for the principal gambling-room at Newmarket is "Little Hell."—Of this gaming room the author once more begs leave to quote the poet,

Sit mihi fas "audita" loqui; sit numine vestro
Pandere res altâ terrâ et "caligine" interfas —VIRG.

precations

precations and blasphemies, hold their impious and accursed reign. The horrid scenes passing in this place are said to exceed all that can be conceived by a mind only conversant in "common" scenes of iniquity and vice. The frauds and stratagems of wily craft, the various and numberless insults on Omnipotence, which pass current here are foul as the deeds themselves, and indeed ought never to be recited beyond these gates of Stygian darkness. The intruding light of the morning is execrated for its hasty approach. "Grant us but to perish in the light"—was the prayer of the warlike Ajax:—"grant us black night for ever"—exclaims the infernal gamester; and his wishes [w] are consistent with his deeds.

What then can be expected by a young adventurer, who is enticed into an attendance on these destructive scenes, but the utter corruption of his heart and morals! but that his property will be dissipated on the ignoble pursuits of the turf, that his columns of rouleaux will fall prostrate before the shrine of the spot-leaved divinity, and his whole fortune be made to tremble at the rattle of a die! For when once the keen and old votaries of the turf and hazard-table have marked the victim of their designs, they have as good as fate down in form to an investment of his estate. A siege is regularly maintained against it, and though the attacks may be gradual at the first onset; yet the advances are made on sure grounds, and the surrender of the castle becomes at length unavoidable. The consumption of the inheritance (like that of the body) may not at first be of the galloping kind, but the slower hectic equally consumes in the end and desolates the vital powers.

[w] Εὐ δὲ φαιεῖ καὶ ὀλεσσοῦν.——Il. 17.

"O thou, that with surpassing glory crown'd,
Look'st from thy sole dominion like the God
Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
Hide their diminish'd heads! to thee I call,
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
O Sun, to tell thee, "how I hate thy beams."

SATAN'S Address to the Sun, Par. Lost, 4.

C H A P. V.

GAMBLING IN THE COMMERCIAL LINE.—LOTTERIES.—STOCK-JOBGING.—NOTORIOUSLY PRODUCTIVE EITHER OF DIRECT OR INDIRECT SELF-MURDER.

C O N T E N T S.

Distinctions between men of commerce and gentlemen by birth much confounded by an influx of wealth.—Hence the former imitate the latter in every species of dissipation.—The notion of being a gentleman applied by a young tradesman to his own destruction.—Consequences of his dissipation and gambling are ruin, robbery, and the gallows, if not anticipated by self-murder.—Short contrast of the effects of idleness and industry.—Masters in trade equally dissipated and extravagant ;—spend fortunes before they acquire them ;—engage in speculations instead of regular commerce ;—gamble in lotteries.—Pernicious effects of lotteries ; publicly encourage gambling, and in consequence self-murder ;—their total suppression earnestly to be wished.—The merchant turns gambler in the stocks.—The frauds and discordant scenes of stock-jobbing.—He turns general gambler, sharper, and swindler, to supply his necessities ;—is at length convicted of forgery, and either cuts his throat or dies on a gallows.—Prevalence of gambling in the commercial line fraught with every evil.

IN former days gay and expensive pleasures were confined to the superior walks of life. The line was more precisely drawn than it is at present between the independent gentleman and the commercial citizen ; the one pursuing his diversions, the other his business with equal assiduity, and without infringing on each other's province. But as commerce has brought a large influx of wealth into the nation, so wealth has introduced a correspondent share of refinements and luxuries into the mercantile world. Ancient distinctions are therefore

fore much confounded; the east end of the town is but the [x] counter-part of the west; and the spirit of extravagance, debauchery, and gambling, affects alike the city and the court. The midnight hours of revelry and riot prevent the industry of the following day; and the morning engagements of business must needs lose their vigour of pursuit, when the preceding night has been sacrificed to diversions and gambling. The labour of the morning tends to profit, the dissipation of the evening to expence; where the former then is neglected to make way for the latter, what can ensue but bankruptcy and ruin!

But the seeds of idleness and vice are encouraged in the early periods of life, by inculcating the ideas of a gentleman into youths, who are to occupy an humbler station. For what do these gentleman-like notions produce, but an opinion, that to submit to manual labour, to the control of a master, and the confinement of business, is below a gentleman, and not to be endured by a lad of any spirit. Such an one expects to lead as free and pleasurable a life as his master, and to have a great deal of time to himself, that he may have leisure to study [y] and affect “the Graces.” Thus the word gentleman and living

[x] ——— “half the platform just reflects the other.”——POPE.

“Hence spring assemblies with such uncouth names
As Deptford, Wapping, Rotherhithe, and Shad-Thames.
Where every month the powder’d white-glov’d sparks,
Spruce haberdashers, pert attorneys’ clerks,
With deep-enamour’d ’prentices, prefer
Their suit to many a fighting milliner:
In scraps of plays their passion they impart,
With all the awkward bows they learn from * Hart.
Whilst Miss despises all domestic rules;
But lisps the French of Hackney boarding schools;
And every lane around Whitechapel-bars,
Refounds with screaming notes and harsh guitars.”

JENNER’S TOWN-ECLOGUES.

[y] It was astonishing to think, how the poor “Graces” suffered in consequence of some well-known letters written by the late Lord Chesterfield. There was not an apprentice of city-ton, who did not lay his rude hands upon them. These elegant and bashful sisters became the public talk; they were bandied about like common prostitutes, and every prig claimed the honour of possessing them.

* Dancing-master for grown gentlemen and ladies.

ing like a gentleman, (that is a desire of adopting all the censurable pleasures, the follies and vices of this character, without a thought of imitating its many noble, liberal and disinterested virtues) has been the destruction of many a youth who might have behaved himself well, had ideas suitable to his future prospects in life been early and strongly impressed on his mind. But setting out with these unfortunate prejudices against the plainness and sobriety of character, the industry and attention requisite in a man of business, our young *Negotio* seeks pleasure and dissipation [z] in its various mazes of deceit and ruin. However

However this "excess" of gracefulness must not be laid to the charge of the noble author, who certainly (whatever were the faults of this publication) never meant to draw up a system of education for the youths of Cheapside.

"The very accoutrements of a man of fashion (says Lord Chesterfield in these letters) are grievous incumbrances to a vulgar man. He is at a loss what to do with his hat, when it is not upon his head; his cane (if unfortunately he wears one) is at perpetual war with every cup of tea or coffee that he drinks; destroys them first, and then accompanies them in their fall. His sword is formidable only to his own legs, which would possibly carry him fast enough out of the way of any sword but his own. His clothes fit him so ill and constrain him so much, that he seems rather their prisoner than their proprietor."

[z] "Time was when fatten waistcoats and scratch wigs
 Enough distinguish'd all the city prigs;
 Whilst every sun-shine Sunday saw them run
 To club their sixpences at Islington.
 But now the 'prentices in suits of green
 At Richmond or at Windsor may be seen;
 Where in mad parties they run down to dine,
 To play at gentlefolks and drink bad wine."—JENNER's Eclogues.

"(Sir William Wealthy.) You cockneys now beat us suburbians at our own weapons. What, old boy, times are changed, since the date of thy indentures; when the sleek crop-eared 'prentice used to dangle after his mistress with the great bible under his arm to St. Bride's on a Sunday; bring home the text; repeat the divisions of a discourse; dine at twelve; and regale upon a gaudy day with buns and beer at Islington or Mile-end.—(R. Wealthy.) Wonderfully facetious!—(Sir William.) Our modern lads are of a different metal. They have their gaming clubs in the garden, their little lodgings, the snug depositories of their rusty swords and occasional bag-wigs; their horses for the turf—aye and their commissions of bankruptcy too before they are well out of their times. (R. Wealthy.) Infamous aspersions!—(Sir William.) But the last meeting at Newmarket, Lord Loftly received at the hazard-table, the identical note from the individual taylor, to whom he had paid it the day before for new liveries."—FOOTE's Minor.

the pigeon is soon marked down in the brothels of prostitution, in the haunts of low vice and iniquitous gambling. He becomes an easy prey to meretricious smiles and nimble-fingered dexterity. He is despoiled of his current cash, but pawns his honour like a gentleman to make up gambling deficiencies. But when all honest resources fail, and he becomes linked in the society of low sharpers and gamblers, he grows desperate, and his master's property must furnish the means of his living like a gentleman. These fingerings of his fraud go the same way, till the repeated theft is discovered and the master threatens public justice. Thus our gentleman's affairs become deranged; and if he be permitted to escape without public notoriety, he is obliged to retire under a cloud of disgrace and infamy. But now he sinks apace into irretrievable poverty and wretchedness. His character is gone, his friends are exhausted—and whither shall he fly? Will his old associates maintain him? No; the feathers are plucked and the carcase is not for their purpose. It is theirs to empty, not to fill, the purses of others. He must starve then, or beg, or steal, or plunder. His last few shillings purchase the fatal instruments of death;—not to be exercised on himself (for here the imitative spirit of the gentleman begins to fail him) but on the first benighted traveller he may happen to meet. He robs on the highway, reigns a short time on the road, till an halter puts an end to his wretched existence: and thus he becomes indirectly a self-murderer, by having made himself liable to the stroke of public justice.—What a dagger at the heart of youth is the spirit of idleness and gambling! wretched are its instigations! vicious and destructive its foul attendants! It paves the way to riot and debauchery, and hurries its votary down the precipice of extravagance and ruin. Hence its steps are marked with dishonesty and fraud; with the vile tricks of the sharper; the despair of the ruined gambler; the outrage of the thief and robber; till poverty comes like an armed man; till disgrace and infamy succeed; till the chain of the murderer, the halter, and the gallows close the horrid scene. Whilst industry, like a plant of stately growth, is precious in its cultivation, and inestimable in its fruits. Industry, like a guardian angel, preserves youth from the temptations of destruction. For where she dwells, there is neither space nor corner of the heart unoccupied; there is as little room for evil thoughts to enter, as time to execute the suggestions of vice. Industry enlarges the under-

standing and improves the heart; she is the handmaid of riches, the parent of virtue, the palladium of honest worth [A].

But it is not just to be severe on youth alone, whose want of age and inexperience, joined to a warmth of passions and violence of temptations, may palliate and excuse many a failure. An inquiry must therefore be made into the conduct of masters in trade, whether they be more exemplary than those, who live under them. But the answer readily suggests itself, that the same desire of rivaling their superiors in rank and fortune, and of living in the style of independent gentlemen, the same spirit of dissipation, the same round of pleasure, diversions, and gambling, so utterly destructive of all industry and attention to business, pervades their station also, and is daily to be lamented in all its baneful effects. Moderation, industry, and frugality are the virtues, which render the man of business respectable in his personal conduct, as well as successful in his fortunes: but when he quits his proper situation to imitate the man of rank, he generally becomes absurd and ridiculous, and for the most part effects his own disgrace and ruin. The present race of commercial men begin, where their forefathers [B] left off. They rely on airy prospects; future riches are to discharge

[A] "The way of the slothful man is an hedge of thorns.
The hand of the diligent maketh rich.
His substance is precious.
He beareth rule."——Book of Proverbs.

See also Hogarth's excellent moral prints of the idle and industrious apprentices.

[B] "Time was

When graver citizens in suits of brown
Lin'd every dusty avenue to town;
Or led the children and the loving spouse
To spend two shillings at White-conduit-house.
But now post-chariots roll their masters down
To some snug box, a dozen miles from town.
That fellow with the tarnish'd suit of lace,
With insolence and folly in his face,
Must raise his soap and candles, to afford
To dress himself on Sundays like a lord.
Whilst that pert puppy with the power'd queue,
Must pay his barber out of me or you.

But

charge present expences; and while they are thus consuming a fortune, they are at the same time discarding the only probable and honest means of obtaining one. For the habits of attention and industry are so worn away by the avocations of pleasure, and those of dissipation so rooted in their stead, that the slow returns of even a profitable trade would not satisfy the hasty calls of extravagance. But as riches are not of spontaneous growth, what must follow on these pursuits of expensive idleness, but that debts will increase, credit fail, and bankruptcy ensue; unless some schemes of speedy gain can be devised to support and improve a tottering fortune. It is easy therefore to prognosticate "Mercator's" future proceedings, and to read his approaching fate. The precipice he stands on is dreadful to behold, and therefore he wishes to discard, as much as possible, all thoughts of his situation. He feeds his expectations for a time on the prospect of some lucky contingency in trade, but when this has proved delusive, the flattering hopes of a fortunate hit throw him into all the arts of chicanery and gambling. Speculation, which is only another term for high gambling in business, now takes place of fair and open commerce; but speculation generally requires the previous sacrifice of honesty and justice [c]. Our falling citizen also catches hold of the promising lures of the "lottery" or deep frauds of the "alley."

The petty-fogger has not more subtilty in setting his peaceable neighbours together by the ears for his own profit, than the speculative schemer has to raise benefit tickets to himself by a lottery. It is no matter how he deludes and im-

But say if candor can forbear to scoff,
 When men begin just where their fires left off.
 But trade to gain is now too slow a way,
 Fortunes must rise like mushrooms in a day."—JENNER'S TOWN Eclogues.

Nam dives qui fieri vult,
 Et cito vult fieri.—JUV. Sat. 14.

"He that maketh haste to be rich, shall not be innocent."—Proverbs.

[c] O cives, cives, quærenda pecunia primum,
 Virtus post nummos.—HOR.

rem facias; rem
 Si possis recte; si non, quocunque modo rem.—HOR.

poses

poses upon others, or to whose ruin he contributes, so he reaps himself the profits of his fraud. But the hope of large gains from this “authorised” species of gambling often leads him to draw the bow of speculation so tight that it retorts upon himself, and thus he becomes the dupe of his own chicanery. But no wonder, that a desperate trader tottering on the verge of bankruptcy and ruin, should eagerly grasp at this delusive phantom, and buoy himself up with the hopes of enjoying her golden treasures. The argument pleads specially in a sanguine mind—“Some one must be successful; any one may; then why not “myself?”—In consequence such an one engages deep and hazards many a stake. A little share of success possibly flatters him to proceed; he begins to feel the imaginary weight of thousands, till at length the bubble bursts and discloses the scene of his own folly and ruin.

Now if the love of gaming be the mortal disease of the present age; if the disposition be universally prevalent, whereby a man is ready to commit his fortunes, himself, and his posterity to chance, then it seems necessary to check by all possible means so destructive a propensity. But the consequence of this pernicious passion is daily discoverable in the distress of individuals and the ruin of whole families. It is highly incumbent therefore to employ the whole force of public authority, as well as of private remonstrance, against the practice of gambling. Advice should never be wanting to dissuade, example to withdraw, or punishment to deter, from the allurements of this vice. To gamble at all, whatever be the event, should be deemed infamous and made liable to severe punishment; since the winner is little better than a robber, and the loser becomes in so many different shapes the murderer of his own peace, his conscience, and himself. Such being the case, what can a lottery be deemed, but an authoritative sanction of that propensity towards gambling, which a good legislature is on every account bound to restrain? Is it not encouraging the lust of irregular acquisition? Is it not publicly inviting a whole nation to participate in those scenes of gambling, which morality abhors, which the laws themselves condemn, but which a narrow-minded policy suggests and countenances?—But who are the deepest adventurers in lotteries? are they not generally to be found among the needy or the extravagant, who are indeed often united in one and the same person?—and to these neither good nor ill success answer any useful purpose; since by the former a man becomes more luxurious and extravagant than

than before, and by the latter he is plunged still deeper in distress.—If it should also be a principal view in every good government, to bestow its favours and rewards on industry, and to discourage idleness, to promote virtue and to discountenance vice, then do lotteries seem purposely contrived to confound and frustrate these ends. The profit or reward in these is indiscriminately held out to the industrious citizen and to the drone, to the foolish and the wise, the worthless and the valuable, the virtuous and the vicious; and perhaps he alone is crowned with success, who is on every account least deserving of his good fortune. But of the numbers, who find themselves ruined at the close of every lottery, not a few seek an oblivion of their folly in the resource of self-murder; and the rope, the razor, or the stream proves the dernier resort of this rage [D] of gambling.

[D] A more than usual number of adventurers were said to have been ruined in the lottery of 1788, owing to several great prizes continuing long in the wheel (which gave occasion to more gambling) and also to the desperate state of certain branches of trade, occasioned by numerous and important bankruptcies. The self-murderers also increased in due proportion. Among many announced in the public prints, the case of one person seemed remarkable for a thoughtful provision not to meet with a disappointment. A woman, who had scraped every thing together to put into the lottery, and who found herself ruined at its close, fixed a rope to a beam of sufficient strength; but lest there should be any accidental failure in the beam or rope, she placed a large tub of water underneath, that she might drop into it; and near her also were two razors on a table ready to be used, in case hanging or drowning should have proved ineffectual.

Indeed whoever wishes to know what are the “blessings” of a lottery, should often visit Guildhall during the time of its drawing; when he will see thousands of workmen, servants, clerks, apprentices, passing and repassing with looks full of suspense and anxiety, and who are stealing at least from their master’s time, if they have not many of them also robbed him of his property, in order to enable them to become adventurers.—In the next place at the end of the drawing, let our observer direct his steps to the shops of the pawnbrokers, and view (as he may) the stock, furniture, and clothes of many hundred poor families, servants, and others, who have been ruined by the lottery. If he wish for further satisfaction, let him attend at the next Old Bailey sessions, and hear the death-warrant of many a luckless gambler in lotteries, who has been guilty of subsequent theft and forgery; or if he seek more proof, let him attend to the numerous and horrid scenes of self-murder, which are known to accompany the closing of the wheels of fortune each year:—and then let him determine on the “wisdom and policy” of lotteries in a commercial city.

A little Tract entitled, “A Prize in the present Lottery for Servants, Apprentices, &c.—printed for Kearsley, 1787, (price 2d. or 1s. 6d. per dozen)” —might be distributed with good effect to servants, &c. in London, before the drawing of every lottery. It contains the history of two servants, who having lost their “all” in lotteries, robbed their master; and in order to prevent being seized and hanged in public, murdered themselves in private.

It is true that many salutary restrictions have been laid by government, to prevent fraudulent practices on the unwary adventurer. These are wholesome laws as far as they reach, and may serve to impede a portion of the evil. But let the idea be offered with all due submission to the higher powers, that since the effects of lottery-gambling are so notoriously destructive, as to render it necessary for statute to be heaped on statute, to guard partially against them,—why not pluck up root and branch at once? why not abstain from raising a trifling revenue by a method fraught with so much mischief? Abolish lotteries themselves, and all their evil consequences are annihilated of course. But whilst our lawgivers themselves are proposing such lures of authority and violent temptations to gambling, what deference can they expect should be paid to a few partial restrictions? The capital prizes are so large, that they excite the eagerness of hope; and scarce can a steady and settled mind refrain from giving its individual encouragement to this immoral mode of raising a small [E] national supply;

[E] The profits arising to the public revenue from a lottery vary each year, according to the scheme or bargain made by government. On opening the budget of 1788, the minister observed in the House of Commons, “that the bargain he had this year for the lottery was so very good for the public, that it would produce a gain of 270,000*l.* from which he would deduct 12,000*l.* for the expenses of drawing &c. and then there would remain a net produce of 258,000*l.*” This therefore we see was deemed an extraordinary profit:—but what is this to the extraordinary mischief done to the community, by this authorised species of excessive gambling!

“A great lottery being holden at London in Paul’s Church-yard at the west door, was begun to be drawn the eleventh of January 1569, and continued day and night, till the sixth of May, whereon the said drawing was fully ended.”—STOWE’S Annals, Howe’s Ed. P. 663.

“In the year 1569, a lottery was set on foot in St. Paul’s Church-yard, when it was begun to be drawn at the west door of the church on the eleventh of January, and continued incessantly drawing day and night till the sixth of May following. Whether this lottery was on account of the public, or the selfish views of private persons, my author (Stowe) does not mention. But it is evident by the time it took up in drawing, it must have been of great concern. This I have remarked, as being the first of the kind I read of in England.”—MAITLAND’S Hist. of London, Vol. I. P. 257.

N. B. A paper was shown to the Society of Antiquaries in 1748, containing “A proposal for a very rich lottery, containing a great number of good prizes, as well of ready money as of plate, and certain sorts of merchandises, having been valued and prized at the command of the queen’s most excellent majesty’s order, (Elizabeth’s) to the intent that such commodities, as may chance to arise thereof, after the charges borne, may be converted towards the reparations of the havens and strength of the realm, and towards such other public good works. The number of lots shall be “four hundred thousand” and no more, and every lot shall be the sum of ten shillings sterling only, and no more. To

supply;—and small indeed it must be deemed, when compared with the infinite mischief it occasions.

But there are other schemes of fraud and cozenage connected with this rage of lottery-gambling, which arrest the attention of our needy merchant-adventurer; such as stock-jobbing in particular, with all the profound and deep mysteries of Exchange-alley. The very essence of stock-jobbing is composed of deceit, lies, and impositions [F] on the credulous public; its practice is a scene of noise and confusion, whilst its abettors are unanimously voted out of the list of rational animals, and consigned over to their ferocious brethren [G] the “bulls and bears.” These (fit associates) gore and worry one another without

be filled by the feast of St. Bartholomew. The show of prizes are to be seen in Cheapside, at the sign of the Queen's Arms, the house of Mr. Dericke, Goldsmith, servant to the queen. Some other orders about it in 1567 and 1568. Printed by Henry Bynneman.” N. B. This was the lottery drawn in 1569.

In 1612, king James in special favour for the present plantations of English colonies in Virginia, granted a lottery to be held at the west end of St. Paul's; whereof Thomas Sharplys, a taylor of London, had the chief prize, which was, “four thousand crowns” in fair plate.—See BAKER's Chronicle.—See an account of the prizes in this lottery, in SMITH's Hist. of Virginia.

[F] “Have you any use in your country (speaking to his Indian companion) for upright honesty and downright dealing? You may buy plenty of them both among the stock-jobbers; for they are a dead commodity with them; and that society are willing to quit their hands of them.”—BROWN's Amusements.

[G] The mystery of stock-jobbing consists in this. The persons concerned in the practice, who are called jobbers, make contracts to buy or sell at a certain distant time a certain quantity of some particular stock; against which time they endeavour according to their contract to raise or lower such stock, by raising rumors and spreading fictitious stories, in order to induce people either to sell out in an hurry and consequently cheaper, if they are to deliver stock; or to become unwilling to sell, and consequently make it dearer, if they are to receive stock. The persons, who make these contracts, are not in general possessed of any real stock; but when the day agreed on comes, they only pay the difference between the price of stock at the time the contract was made and on that day; and thus they may gamble with imaginary thousands without being worth a single hundred. In the language of the alley, the buyer of imaginary stock is called the “bull,” and the seller the “bear;” and the man, who cannot pay his difference, the “lame duck.” Besides these; real stock-proprietors and great monied men, who want to buy or sell, raise fictitious stories to vary the price of stocks, as best suits their own views.—See more of stocks and stock-jobbing in GUTHRIE's Geographical Grammar, article—“English stocks.”

mercy, and the Stock-Exchange, from its dissonant [H] jargon seems literally, to one ignorant of the mysterious science, the very temple of discord [I], if not of insanity. But speculation in this refined game of the stocks is a nice and artful point. It is true, you may play with imaginary riches; but the day of discount arrives, when superior art may have outwitted your fabrication of lies, or even truth itself for once have forced attention and fineessed you out of thousands. Then commences the fierce engagement “bull against bear”; and it is well if the vanquished beast has strength enough left to waddle like a “lame duck” out of the alley.

But the worried Mercator has just made shift to waddle home; and disappointed thus in his forlorn hope, he dares not show his face again in the alley without his bags of golden peace; he is therefore lost in despair, rage, and madness. If his intervals of reason return, money must be procured at any rate. The genius of “fraud” is invoked, who appears under the disguise of gambling, sharpening, swindling, and supports for a while his aching head. But at length the “forged note” completes his destruction, and, though born to better hopes and a better fate, had prudence been his guide, behold him now on the fable plat-form, surrounded with highwaymen, house-breakers, and murderers, and about to suffer the just punishment of his crimes—unless he has prevented the stroke of public justice by his own private assassination [K].

The

[H] Garganum mugire putes nemus.—HOR.

——— linguæ centum sunt oraque centum
Ferreæ vox.—VIRG.

[I] It is a common story, that a Londoner carrying his country-cousin to see fights told him that among other places he would show him “Bedlam” that morning, after he had been at the Tower, &c. Happening to go by the Stock-Exchange in his way to the Tower, he opened the door and bid his friend look in; who quickly shut it again saying, “he would see no more of Bedlam that day, as the mad-folks were all loose.”

[K] Several thousands of the following paper were dispersed through London, and it is to be hoped, that some of them might produce that “good effect,” which was so anxiously desired by the person, who wished them to be distributed.

“A full and particular account of a person who threw himself into the Thames, from Blackfriars-bridge, on Wednesday, July 10, 1782. With the melancholy paper he left behind him, accounting to his wife and children for so rash an action.

The above are dismal truths, but confirmed by daily experience. For did ever extravagance and gambling in all its varied forms reign more triumphant in

“ Midnight, July 10, 1782.

“ Whoever thou art that readest this paper, listen to the voice of one from the “dead.”—While
“ thine eyes peruse the lines, their writer may be suffering the most horrid punishments, which an
“ incensed Creator can inflict upon the greatest sinner.

“ Reader, art thou of my own sex? art thou a man? O, in whatever rank of life, whether high
“ or low, “beware of gaming!” Beware of so much as approaching an E O table! Had I ever
“ met with such a dreadful warning as I now offer thee, I might perhaps have been saved from death,
“ have been snatched from damnation.

“ Reader, art thou a woman? O, whether rich or poor, whether wife, mother, sister, or daughter;
“—if thou suspect that the late hours, the feverish body, the disturbed mind, the ruffled temper,
“ the sudden extravagance of him whom thou lovest, are caused by frequenting the gaming-table;
“ o, fail not to discover thy suspicions!—fail not to remonstrate! Had but my dear wife remonstrated
“ with me, when she saw me, in consequence of my winnings, indulge in expence, which she must
“ have known I could not honestly afford, she would not now, within the next hour, be deprived of
“ her husband,—of the only support of herself and her three poor children in this world; and deprived
“ of him in a manner, which effectually cuts off all hopes of our ever meeting in the happiness of
“ another.—For is it possible God can ever pardon him, who basely flies from every duty for which
“ he was created, and insolently throws back the existence, which his Maker gave him? Can the
“ self-murderer even hope to be forgiven?—O! no! no! and yet I cannot, will not live!—When
“ I come into the presence of my God, nothing shall I have to offer in my excuse; by myself I am,
“ must be, and ever shall be condemned; yet within an hour am I determined to plunge into that
“ condemnation!

“ Yes, in less than an hour, coward as I am, I shall have deserted my duty and my family in this
“ world; and, wretch as I am, shall have rushed into all the horrors of hell in another world, by
“ “drowning myself.”—O, reader, reader! if thou fear hell, or wish to inherit heaven, “beware of
“ gaming!”

“ By curiosity I was first led to the E O table; ashamed to stand idle, I put upon E, it came E;
“ upon O, it came O: fortune favoured me (as I foolishly called it) and I came away winner.—
“ Something worse than curiosity, though hardly more dangerous, carried me to another table another
“ night. My view in going was answered. My view was to “win,” and again I “won” in the
“ course of the evening. Again I went—and again I “won.” For some weeks this was the con-
“ stant story. O happy, if I had lost at first! Now I went every night; every thing I ought to have
“ done was neglected; up all night, I was forced to lie in bed all day; the strength of my mind,
“ which at “this” moment might save me, was hourly wasting away; my wife was deceived with con-
“ tinual falsehoods, to which nothing but her fondness for me blinded her; even my winnings, with the
“ expence and extravagance in which I indulged myself and family, were every day more than half ex-
“ hausted. But I felt that I was always to win. Fortune favoured me. Fortune was now my deity;

in the bosom of trade? Did ever consequent fraud and forgery so fearfully pervade the whole system of commerce?—The career begins in idleness, holds its pro-

“and I had discarded and forgotten the God, who made me,—that offended God, whom now, in a few minutes—yes, in a few minutes, I shall appear before that God, to receive the punishment, which I know, which I confess myself to merit.

“Yes, fortune, my new, my false deity, deserted me; “my luck turned”—I am undone! ruined! a beggar! my wife and children will want a morsel of bread to eat; and my habits of gaming for so many months have worn out of my mind those wholesome sentiments of religion, which, at a former period of my life, would have taught me in the greatest distress to seek comfort from prayer, to rely on God; of God’s goodness I am still convinced, though I still remain resolved to—yes—to die! To destroy myself is the only way left to preserve my family from “want,” and to keep myself from the “gallows.” This morning I absolutely hesitated, whether I should not procure a sum of money with which to try my luck—by “forgery.”—Gamblers, think of that—“forgery”!—O my dear wife, is not any thing better than seeing me conveyed to Tyburn?—Yes, it is better that before many hours you and your three helpless daughters should be hanging in tears (I little merit) over my lifeless, cold, and swollen body.

“Readers farewell! From my sad and voluntary death “learn wisdom.” In consequence of gaming, I go to seek my destruction in the Thames. O think in what manner he deserves to be punished, who commits a crime, which he is fully persuaded merits, and will not fail to meet the severest punishment.”

“Such was the resolution formed by a man naturally virtuous and religious. A twelvemonth earlier in his life, that is before he had seen a gaming-table, who could have persuaded him, that the most distant idea of such a diabolical deed would ever enter into his head? He would not have believed it possible, that he should ever deliberately think of committing a crime, which would have inevitably brought him to the gallows; that he should actually commit self-destruction.—“Play—bad luck—forgery—self-murder!” Who then that ventures to game, shall dare be sure that he is safe?—Such also was the paper, which in consequence of his resolution he left behind him, accompanied with the following memorandum: “Let this cry from the dead be made as public as possible, for a dreadful warning to my survivors.”—Between one and two o’clock in the morning, he took a sad farewell of this world; and, with the strongest internal conviction of the punishment his crime would meet in another world, “he leaped off Black-friars bridge.” It pleased a superintending Providence, that he should be seen committing this desperate action by two watermen, who found his body after it had been a considerable time under water.—In consequence of the methods proposed by the “Humane Society,” he was at length almost miraculously restored to life and to his family; from a state in which, before the existence of that society, he would have been consigned to the grave.—In consequence of the advice of a worthy clergyman, he was restored to reason and to religion. He now wonders, how he could think of committing so horrid a crime; and is not without hopes that by a life of continual repentance and exemplary religion, he may obtain pardon hereafter, through the merits of his blessed Saviour and Redeemer.

“The paper, which he wrote before he set forth to drown himself, he still desires should be made as public as possible; and that this narrative should be added to it.”

gress through the diversified regions of dissipation, and terminates in the chambers of infamy and death.

C H A P. VI.

GAMBLING AMONG FEMALES.—TRUTH'S ADDRESS TO THE LADIES.—CONSEQUENCE OF THIS PRACTICE AMONG THEM.—GAMBLING AMONG MEN OF RANK AND DISTINCTION.—ITS FATAL CONSEQUENCES AND PRODUCTION OF SELF-MURDER.

C O N T E N T S.

Disagreeable task to be obliged to expose female frailties ; but truth requires it should be done.—Truth's address to the female sex on their affectation of masculine pursuits and love of gambling.—Inconveniencies and ruin to which women are exposed by an excessive love of play.—Gambling in high life.—Difference between quick parts and good sense ; preference due to the latter.—Quick parts not to be trusted but under the guidance of discretion and prudence ; seldom accompanied by application, especially in early life.—Hence a want of solid improvement at the entrance into life.—Distinction coveted by youths of rank and abilities : but it is too often in trifles or in vicious pursuits, in adulterous connexions, and the haunts of gambling.—Consequences of these described : ruin, distraction, self-murder.—Address to youths of distinction to profit by the fate of their late companion.—Degrading and dishonourable methods pursued by gamblers of distinction to repair their broken fortunes.

THE writer enters with reluctance on his next article of discussion ; but a deference to truth requires, that he should not wholly pass by the grievous effects of “female” gambling. But as the delicacy of the sex may possibly take less offence at the remonstrances of “Truth” speaking for herself than at the strictures of an insignificant writer, let this venerable personage, to whom

whom so much respect and attention is due, be supposed addressing the female sex in the following manner.

“ Much have I mourned over those deviations from female grace and beauty, which are produced by an affectation of masculine pursuits ! How long, ye fair ones, will ye delight in adopting the rough manners and disguises of manhood ! how long will ye neglect those soft distinctions of sex—“ those thousand decencies”—[L] on which your empire over the heart of man might be so firmly established ! My tearful eye averts from your assumption of manly attire and manly confidence ; from your pursuit of masculine-[M] diversions ;

[L] “ Neither her outside form’d so fair, nor aught
So much delights me, as those graceful acts,
Those thousand decencies, that daily flow
From all her words and actions.”—MILTON, *Par. Lost*, B. 8.

[M] ——— “ ’Tis not joy to her,
This falsely-cheerful, barbarous game of death.
But if the rougher sex by this fierce sport
Be hurried wild, let not such horrid joy
E’er stain the bosom of the British fair.
Far be the spirit of the “chace” from them !
Uncomely courage, unbeseeming skill,
To spring the fence, to rein the prancing steed,
The cap, the whip, the masculine attire,
In which they “roughen” to the sense, and all
The winning softness of their sex is lost.

——— May their tender limbs
Float in the loose simplicity of dress !
And fashion’d all to harmony alone,
Know they to seize the captivated soul
In rapture warbled from love-breathing lips ;
To teach the lute to languish ; with smooth step
Disclosing motion in its every charm,
To swim along and swell the mazy dance ;
To train the foliage o’er the snowy lawn ;
To guide the pencil, turn the tuneful page ;
To lend new flavour to the fruitful year,
And heighten nature’s dainties ; in their race
To rear their graces into second life ;

“ diversions ; and above all from your indecorous aim at theatrical [N] applause.
 “ Yet it were well, if these imitations of man were confined to his less faulty
 “ amusements ; if they did not also participate of his grosser follies and vices.
 “ Listen then, ye daughters of the midnight hour, and despise not the obser-
 “ vations of plain truth and decorum. When I lament over your hollow
 “ eyes, your languid features, your “ pale” complexions (for my eye pierces
 “ through the bloom of art) I ascribe it all to the vigils of darkness ; those
 “ vigils, which are so constantly observed by you, and employed in such a scene
 “ of anxiety and solicitude. What then ! is a parent ill ? has a brave brother
 “ received an honourable wound in battle, which asks the soothing of a sister’s
 “ care ? is an affectionate and worthy husband stretched on the bed of sick-
 “ ness, or are your maternal feelings excited by the nightly cries of your sweet
 “ and helpless babes ? Then were your spirits worn away in a meritorious ser-
 “ vice, then would outward respect and inward satisfaction richly compensate
 “ your decay of health and external beauty. But alas, is such the case ? I
 “ fear the midnight hour has its different occupation ; and that though dissi-
 “ pation of various sorts lays claim to a share, yet the love of gaming alone
 “ demands a large portion of this wreck of time, of health, and happiness.
 “ That the amusement of the card-table may be sometimes warrantable and in-
 “ nocent I wish not to deny ; since cards serve the purposes of amicable inter-
 “ course ; afford something to do, where people have little to say ; and keep up

To give society its highest taste ;
 Well-order’d home man’s best delight to make ;
 And by submissive wisdom, modest skill,
 With every gentle, care-eluding art
 To raise the virtues, animate the bliss,
 And sweeten all the toils of human life :—
 “ This be the female dignity and praise.”

THOMSON’S Seasons, Autumn.

— “ Nothing lovelier can be found
 In woman, than to study household good ;
 And good works in her husband to promote.” — MILTON.

[N] Weighty are the objections against private theatrical exhibitions in respect to their effects on female manners. When the necessary freedoms they must occasion, as well as the general cast of characters in our most favourite English comedies are considered, let each husband and father answer for himself, whether he would wish his wife or daughter to be distinguished in this line of amusement ?

“ the

“ the good humour of many a mixed company, which might otherwise be
 “ heartily tired of each other. To play with moderation is certainly both in-
 “ nocent and lawful; but not to the detraction of more important and serious
 “ duties: to play is a matter of indifference in itself, but when inordinately
 “ pursued leads to the most important and serious evils. That a distinction is
 “ to be made between a love of play and a love of gambling may be allowed;
 “ but yet caution must be used, lest the distinction should prove of no wider
 “ separation than between the points of departing twilight and its succeeding
 “ darkness.

“ But in you, my female friends, in whom delicacy and decorum are the
 “ preservatives of virtue, an excessive love of play must be pregnant with
 “ every evil. What shall I say to see a female countenance writhed and tor-
 “ tured with every discordant and ugly passion! to behold vexation and anger
 “ distorting the fairest symmetry of grace and loveliness, and exposing the eager
 “ solicitude of the palpitating heart! Are not these indecorous agitations, which
 “ indicate too deep an anxiety for what ought to be a mere [o] amusement?
 “ For

[o] “ At this the blood the virgin’s cheek forfook,
 A livid paleness spreads o’er all her look:
 She fees and trembles at the approaching ill,
 Just in the jaws of ruin and codille.”—*Rape of the Lock*, III, 40.

“ I have observed ladies, who in all other respects are gentle, good humoured, and the very pink
 of good breeding, who as soon as the ombre-table is called for, and they are set down to their busi-
 ness, are immediately transfigured into the veriest wasps in nature.”—*Spectator*, N^o 141.

“ I cannot but be grieved, when I see a fine woman fretting and bleeding inwardly from such mo-
 tives; when I behold the face of an angel agitated and discomposed by the heart of a fury.”—*Guardian*, N^o 120.

“ I have known a bad game suddenly produced on a good one for a deep stake at bragg or com-
 merce, almost make the “vermilion” turn pale, and elicit from lips, where the sweets of Hybla
 dwelt, and where the loves and graces played, some murmured oaths, which though minced and miti-
 gated a little in their termination, seemed to me upon the whole to be rather “unbecoming.”—*The*
World, N^o 189.

(Lady Townley.) “ I dote upon assemblies; my heart bounds at a ball; and at an opera I expire.
 Then I love play to distraction; cards enchant me, and dice put me out of my little wits. Dear,
 dear hazard! o what a flow of spirits it gives one!—Do you never play at hazard, child? (Lady
 Grace.) O never. I do not think it fits well upon women: there is something so masculine, so

“ For tell me, ye daughters of eager play, does not its desire increase with its
 “ gratification? Does not every domestic employment in consequence pall and
 “ tire? Do you seek the company and conversation of a tender and indulgent
 “ husband? Is there music any longer in the prattle of your babes? Does it
 “ now delight you to improve their opening understandings, to correct the
 “ faulty tendencies, and to fortify the good dispositions of their ripening years?
 “ or do you not rather count the tedious moments till the hour of play ar-
 “ rives, and fly from home, as from a troublesome monitor, that tacitly up-
 “ braids your thoughtless conduct? Nor is the loss of all domestic enjoyment,
 “ the furious agitation of your minds, and the languor and ill-health of your
 “ bodies (though bad enough) your only sufferings; since by the constant ce-
 “ lebration of these nocturnal rites, the liveliest parts are eclipsed, the under-
 “ standing is deprived of all rational enjoyment, and the heart is despoiled of
 “ all moral and religious sentiment:—the spotted card and the spotted hear-
 “ are nearly allied to and just emblems of each other. Besides, how can de-
 “ respect await the characters of those women, who make no scruple of thus
 “ spending whole nights with men over the gaming-table? and fine as the
 “ spider’s web is the construction of female honour; it bears no rude gæ to
 “ assail it; the gentlest breeze, the murmurs of a whisper are sufficient to de-

much the air of a rake in it. You see how it makes the “men” swear and curse; and when a
 “woman” is thrown into the same passion—why—(Lady T.) That is very true. One is a little put
 to it sometimes, not to make use of the same words to express it. (Lady G.) Well, and upon ill
 luck, pray what words are you really forced to make use of? (Lady T.) Why upon a very hard case
 indeed, when a sad wrong word is rising just to one’s tongue end—I give a great gulp—and swallow
 it down again.”—The Provoked Husband.

“ When our women thus fill their imaginations with pips and counters, I cannot wonder at the
 story I have lately heard of a new-born child that was marked with a five of clubs.”—Guardian,
 N^o 120, where is more on the subject of female gaming.

“ I was conveyed methought into the entrance of the infernal regions, where I saw Rhadamanthus,
 one of the judges of the dead, seated in his tribunal. On his left hand stood the keeper of Erebus,
 on his right, the keeper of Elysium. I was told, that he sate upon women that day. “Madam
 “ (says he to the first that appeared before him) you have lived upon earth about fifty years. What
 “ have you been doing there all this while?” “Doing, Sir, (says she) really I do not know what
 “ I have been doing; I desire I may have time given me to recollect.” After about half an hour’s
 pause she told him, “that she had been playing at crimp.” Upon which Rhadamanthus beckoned to
 the keeper on his left hand, to take her into custody.”—Guardian, N^o 158.

“stroy the delicacy of its texture; the spider indeed can repair her own web,
“but woman’s fame once ruffled is for the most part blown away for ever.

“But high gaming must often be accompanied with great losses; and after
“all the resources regular and irregular, honest and fraudulent, are dissipated,
“yet game-debts must be paid. The winner is no stranger to the necessities
“of the case, hints at commutations [P], which dare not be refused; and thus
“the last invaluable jewel of female possession is unavoidably resigned. This
“is indeed the forest of all evils, but an evil to which every deep female gamester
“is inevitably exposed. Fly then, ye inconsiderate daughters of play, if ye re-
“gard beauty, value health, delight in innocence, and wish for happiness, fly
“from all the horrors of excessive gaming. Reflect, that the regulations of
“the family, together with all its rational pleasures and delights, its honours
“and its heirs, essentially depend on your [Q] good conduct. If ye despise
“these warnings of Truth, time will at length force a conviction of their im-
“portance; but not before every degree of misfortune, wretchedness, and ruin
“has overtaken you. But if ye will readily listen to wholesome counsels, and
“continue to tread in the paths of female decorum,—honour, grace, and in-
“nocence will protect your dwellings, credit and distinction will await you
“abroad, while the warmth of friendship, and the tenderness of love, will
“crown the circle of your domestic enjoyments.”—Leaving then the female

[P] “In one of the very early exhibitions at Spring-Gardens, a very pleasing, small picture by Hogarth made its first appearance. It was painted for the Earl of Charlemont, in whose collection it remains. It was entitled, “Picquet or Virtue in danger,” and shows a young lady, who during a tête-à-tête had just lost all her money to an handsome officer of her own age. He is represented in the act of returning her an handful of bank-bills, with the hope of exchanging them for a softer acquisition and more delicate plunder. On the chimney-piece are a watch-case and a figure of Time over it with this motto, “Nunc.” Hogarth has caught his heroine during this moment of hesitation, this struggle with herself, and has marked her feelings with uncommon success”——Anecdotes of Hogarth, by Nichols.

“All play-debts must be paid in specie or by an equivalent. The “man” that plays beyond his income pawns his estate; the “woman” must find out something else to mortgage, when her pin-money is gone. The husband has his lands to dispose of, the wife her person. Now when the female body is once dipped, if the creditor be very importunate, I leave my reader to consider the consequences.”——Guardian, N^o 120.

[Q] ——— in te omnis domus inclinata recumbit.——VIRG. ÆN. XII.

imitators of masculine follies and vices to make their own comments on this plain and serious address of Truth, the next display shall be of the destructive effects of gambling amid persons of distinguished birth and fortune.

Pernicious as gambling has been discovered to be in the middle ranks of life, yet its consequences are still more dreadful (if possible) in those of superior station; since the influence of their example is so powerful; since the honesty and independence of gambling statesmen must ever be doubtful, and such a defiance of laws is shown by their very framers: all which are evils of the first magnitude. Many are those youths of distinction, whose endowments of mind are equally illustrious with their births and fortunes; and whose abilities under such a powerful introduction must shine with increased lustre. But the misfortune is, that this brilliancy of parts and vivacity of imagination is more apt to lead them astray from the paths of good sense and judgment, than if they had been born in humbler station; since flattery will abound and restraint be diminished. Hence they will add to the numerous examples of those, in whom quick parts and practical good sense are disunited.

Quick parts and good practical sense and judgment are of a very different complexion [R], and have not unfrequently a separate existence. Men are caught indeed by the effusions of a brilliant fancy and bright imagination; but its refulgence and flashes, like the coruscations of the diamond, serve only to sparkle in the eye of the beholder, and to dazzle his sight, without further use or advantage to any one: whereas practical good sense circulates like current coin to general profit. Shining parts, like the bright colourings of porcelain, or the lustres of glass in a well furnished house, are beautiful decorations and striking

[R] "If you have wit, which I am not sure that I wish you, unless you have at the same time at least an equal portion of judgment to keep it in good order, wear it like your sword in the scabbard; and do not brandish it to the terror of the whole company. Appear to have rather less than more wit than you really have. A wise man will live at least as much within his wit, as within his income. Content yourself "with sound good sense and reason;" which at the long run are ever sure to please every body, who has either. If wit comes into the bargain, welcome it (as a lustre) but never invite it. Bear this truth always in your mind, that you may be "admired" for your wit, if you have any, but that good sense and good qualities alone can make you "beloved." These are substantial, every day's wear, whereas wit is like a holiday-suit, which people put on only to be stared at."—CHES-
TERFIELD'S Letters.

ornaments ; but good sense, like the solid service of plate, is alone substantial and intrinsically valuable. Sound judgment is of daily use, not only to its possessor, but to all, who have the good fortune to be connected with him. There is no station in life, which a plain, good understanding does not adorn, no occurrence of daily experience, which does not partake of its genial influence. The man of parts may be admired for his quickness, as the racer is, who flies before the wind ; but it is the draft or road-horse of steadier pace that (like good sense) is useful to mankind. It is not the warmth and elevations of fancy, or the quick and bright assemblage of ideas, which irradiate the paths of beneficial truth ; since none are more liable to error than they, who conduct themselves by the wild and dancing light of imagination alone. None can less bear the sobriety of plain reasoning, or have less patience to trace the process of a serious argument than they, whose fire and vivacity make them love nothing, but what is uncommon, marvellous, and striking. But useful truths and moral duties are neither uncommon nor marvellous ; and consequently the exalted and elastic genius is apt to decry the poor, low, groveling spirit of those, who seek to conciliate the affections and to deserve the respect of mankind, by an anxiety to perform the plain duties of social life. The fear of being shackled by vulgar rules and vulgar opinions without inquiring into their propriety, decency, or truth, is the bane of many a promising genius, who owes his ruin to what he prides himself on possessing—superior abilities ; since these may be specious without solidity, and showy without sense.—Such an one may likewise be endowed (or think he is so) with a soul of sensibility ; but not having cultivated the practical powers of a discriminating judgment, his affectation of sentiment will lead him captive at will, and his acute feelings will as often be exercised on wrong as right objects. He will encroach in many a particular on the powers of this poor tortured word, and will plead a sensibility in love, in friendship, in compliance with evil, as a sufficient, nay a meritorious excuse for transgressing the plainest rules of common sense and common morality. So little then are either bright parts, or the mere effusions of sentiment to be deemed respectable, unless they submit to be guided by discretion, prudence, and judgment ; they may assist as ornamental and enlivening auxiliaries, but are too capricious, volatile, and unsteady, to be ever safely entrusted with the supreme command.

To be nobly born is often a youth's great misfortune ; since the same abilities and spirit, had he been of less illustrious descent, might have urged him to "merit" all those distinctions, which he now too well knows "must" be his own by inheritance. This destroys many of the good fruits of emulation and strenuous exertion. Quick parts are seldom attended with much application, especially in the early periods of life : hence there is but little foundation laid of solid improvement, which alone can be obtained by close attention and study. When the time then arrives (and fashion appoints a very early period against the dictates of sense) that a young man of rank is to be introduced into the world, and to become in a manner his own master, he finds little to depend on for the regulation of his conduct, but those lively parts with which nature has endowed him, unsupported by any solid acquisitions of sense and judgment. He sees other ingenuous youths less brilliant than himself climbing into fame by the steps of knowledge, by the paths of industry and application ; possibly he approves their steadiness, but the volatility of his own disposition prevents an imitation. Yet still the liveliness of his imagination disdains obscurity, and the sensibility of his disposition is ill at ease without the glitter of distinction. The eye of observation is his aim, and to lead the way is the delight of his soul. With these impressions of youthful vanity, and being too indolent and unsteady to attain solid distinctions, he easily slides into the desire of being the first in fashion as in birth. But the accomplishments of fashion are soon acquired, especially by a man of rank and fortune. Hence such an one may quickly become the standard of taste, and be esteemed the quintessence of grace and elegance ; and when he has rendered his air, and manners, and conversation most agreeably insignificant, he may soon be recognised "as an abridgement of the trifles of the age."

Yet happy might it prove for any one of the above description, could he rest contented with reigning over the kingdom of trifling alone, as he need not fear having a crowd of prostrate subjects in the wide domains of vanity and idle show. But this sovereign of taste and elegance must needs enlarge his empire over vice as well as folly ; he must be the rake and profligate of fashionable eclat, the adulterer, the gambler, or his rage for leading the "ton" will scarce be satisfied. His gay accomplishments ensure him success over female frailty ; and the sensibility of his feelings is not wounded (since fashion does not pointedly condemn)

condemn) when he encroaches on the conjugal felicity of his bosom friend. His lawless amours and conquests of adulterous infamy form a fruitful subject of conversation in the polite circle; and though many a parent is wounded to the quick, and many an husband's heart bleeds for the dishonour of his house, yet the same smile of approbation awaits his entrance into the fashionable circle, the same attention hangs on his opening lips, the same murmur of applause courts his [s] acceptance. Not a frown dare sit on the brow of indigent virtue, under pain of being thought deficient in good breeding; not a female flies the venom of his deceitful tongue; but the honey of this buzzing bee is greedily sucked in, without heeding his lurking and empoisoned sting. For is it not a lamentable truth, that the heart of woman too frequently yearns towards her destroyer; and that the known seducers of the day are still charming in her sight, though blackened over with every vice, that feminine decorum, modesty, and innocence should hold in detestation and abhorrence?

But the youth desirous of fashionable fame stops not here. He aspires to the first dignities of the plains of Newmarket; he attends every meeting, keeps a fine stud, races, bets, and games with high spirit, in hopes of being saluted by the right honourable members of the jockey-club, as the most promising genius on the turf. The haunts of polite gaming also in the metropolis [r] claim his

[s] *Namque ibi fortunæ veniam damus—alea turpis,
Turpe et adulterium mediocribus; hæc eadem illi
Omnia cum faciant, hilares nitidique vocantur.*—Juv. XI.

[r] The following humorous account is to be found in the Gentleman's Magazine, Jan. 1731.—“It may be some amusement to present our readers with the following list of officers established in the most notorious gambling houses.

1. A commissioner:—who is always a proprietor; who looks in of a night, and who audits the week's account with two other proprietors.
2. A director:—who superintends the room.
3. An operator:—who deals the cards at a cheating game called Faro.
4. Two crow-pees:—who watch the cards and gather the money for the bank.
5. Two puffs:—who have money given them to decoy others to play.
6. A clerk:—who is a check on the puffs; to see that they sink none of the money, that is given them to play with.

his attendance ; he must be noticed in them for the spirit of his play ; and whatever species of gambling occupies the stake, he boldly ventures his rouleaux with

7. A squib :—who is a puff of a lower rank, who serves at half salary, whilst he is learning to deal.
8. A flasher :—to swear how often the bank has been stripped.
9. A dunner :—who goes about to recover money lost at play.
10. A waiter :—to fill out wine, snuff candles, and attend the room.
11. An attorney :—who is generally a Newgate-solicitor.
12. A captain :—who is to fight any gentleman, that is peevish at losing his money.
13. An usher :—who lights gentlemen up and down stairs, and gives the word to the porter.
14. A porter :—who is generally a foldier of the foot-guards.
15. An orderly-man :—who walks up and down the outside of the door, to give notice to the porter, and alarm the house at the approach of the constables.
16. A runner :—who is to get intelligence of the justices' meetings.
17. Link boys, coachmen, chairmen, drawers, and others :—who bring the first intelligence of justice-meetings, of constables being out, at half a guinea reward.
18. Common-bail ; affidavit-men ; ruffians ; bravos ; assassins—cum multis aliis."

The above list of officers however are only calculated for gambling houses of an inferior order ; since those hinted at in the following extract from the public prints seem to defy law and to spurn at justice. " Billiard-tables were once the haunts of men of fashion, but now of tradesmen of every description ; and it is said, that the magistrates are about to reform this evil. Let them begin at the fountain-head of gambling ; for till a reform is made there, no reform can be made in the state. Do not the magistrates know, that there are houses supported at an amazing expence, within sight of the king's palace, which are open every night and all night, where men of the first rank are to be found gambling away immense sums of money, such as no man whatever his fortune may be, can sustain. What then are the consequences ? why, that the undone part of them sell their votes for bread, and that the successful bestow them for honours. He, who has never seen the gambler's apartments in some of the magnificent houses in the neighbourhood of St. James's, has never seen the most horrid sight the imagination of a thinking man can conceive. A new pack of cards is called for every deal, and the old ones are thrown upon the floor, and to such an immense quantity, that the writer of this letter has seen a very large room nearly ankle deep in the greatest part of it by four o'clock in the morning : judge then to what height they must have risen by day-light. Let the magistrates then strike at the root of the evil : lords, commons, orators, patriots are and ought to be, as liable to the laws, as tradesmen, swindlers, and pickpockets. The mischief began there, and there the remedy must be first applied ; a surgeon may as well attempt to heal a fore over the thorn that is in the finger, as to suppress gamblers by beginning with the tradesmen who frequent billiard tables."

The following is supposed to be an Indian's account of a gaming room, as related in " Brown's Amusements." " The English pretend (says the Indian) that they worship but one God ; but for my part I do not believe what they say. For beside several " living divinities," to which we may see them daily

with coolness and composure; for as yet he plays for fame and pleasure alone, without experiencing the want of a resource. But the destructive brood of sharpers ply around and mark their devoted victim. Already has imagination plucked his golden plumes; and it will not be easy for him to escape the fangs of these devouring sharks. They prey on unguarded innocence; call themselves men of honour without an honourable idea; apply every artifice and fraud against fair and open dealing; avail themselves of the flushings of ebriety; and stick, like leeches, till they have sucked the heart's blood, and drawn their wretched dupe into the abyss of misery and ruin. But now the towering forests and venerable mansions begin to tremble in expectation of their future destiny. The box and dice form a terrible artillery, which plays against ancient castles, and opens wider breaches than the most heavy cannon. When once a youth, however formed by birth and abilities to adorn a distinguished station, becomes ensnared in the trammels of the sharpers, (and the politest circles are not free from such vermin) he begins greedily to imbibe the true spirit of gambling. His ideas change apace with his ill success; he plays no longer for fashionable fame

daily offering their vows, they have other inanimate ones, to whom they offer sacrifices, as I have observed at one of their public meetings, where I happened once to be. In this place there is a great altar to be seen, built round and covered with a green whacum, lighted in the midst, and encompassed by several persons in a sitting posture, as we do at our domestic sacrifices. At the very moment I came into the room, one of them, who I suppose was the priest, spread upon the altar certain leaves, which he took out of a little book that he held in his hands. Upon these leaves were represented certain "figures" very awkwardly painted. However they must needs be the images of some divinities; for in proportion as they were distributed round, each one of the assistants made an offering to it, greater or less, according to his devotion. I observed that these offerings were more considerable than those which they make in their other temples. After the aforesaid ceremony is over, the priest lays his hand in a trembling manner, as it were, on the rest of the book, and continues sometime in this posture, seized with fear and without any action at all. All the rest attentive to what he does are immovable. At last on every leaf, which he returns to them, these assistants are all of them possessed by different agitations, according to the spirit, which happens to seize them. One joins his hands together and "blesses heaven;" another very earnestly looking upon his image "grinds his teeth;" a third "bites his fingers and stamps on the ground." Every one of them in short puts himself into such extraordinary postures, and uses such contortions, that he scarce seems to be any longer a rational creature. But scarce has the priest returned a certain leaf, but he is likewise seized by the same fury, as the rest. He "tears the book" or "devours" it in his rage, "throws down" the altar, and "curses" the sacrifice. Nothing now is to be heard but complaints and groans, cries and imprecations. I judge from their fury, that the God they worship is a jealous deity, who to punish them for sacrificing to other gods, sends an evil demon to possess them."

or pleasure, but for recovery of losses, for profit, and interest. Anxious solicitude sits brooding on his brow, and the fretful feelings of discontent rankle at his heart. He trembles in eager hope at each grasp of the box, and either joy beams in his eye on the lucky turn, or chagrin and vexation, rage and madness, distort every feature of his face, when the die is cast which throws away thousands. The horror of his countenance, the anguish of his mind,—but it is the moral pencil of the inimitable Hogarth alone, which can pourtray the perturbations of a ruined gamester; he delineates more forcibly to our senses than the most descriptive pen of the readiest writer; we “read” the maxims of the wise moralist, but we “see,” we “feel” the expressive touches of “his” original [v] productions.—

But at length our noble gamester finds himself completely ruined, seizes in some frantic moment the fatal instrument of death, and thus terminates his

[v] See his print of the gaming house in the rake’s progress.—Three stages of that species of madness, which attends gaming are there described. On the first shock all is inward dismay. The ruined gamester is represented leaning against a wall with his arms across, lost in an agony of horror. Shortly after this horrible gloom bursts into a storm and fury; he tears in pieces whatever comes next him, and kneeling down invokes curses on himself. His next attack is on others; on every one whom he imagines to have been instrumental in his ruin. The eager joy of the winning gamesters, the attention of the usurer, and the profound reverie of the highwayman are strongly marked.

It cannot be disagreeable to any reader of taste, that the following just and inimitable epitaph on Hogarth should be inserted here; which is to be seen in Chiswick church-yard, and was written by Garrick.

“Here lieth the body of William Hogarth, who died October 26, 1764, aged 67.

I.

“Farewell great painter of mankind,
Who reach’d the noblest point of art;
Whose pictur’d morals charm the mind,
And through the eye correct the heart.

II.

If genius fire thee, reader, stay;
If nature touch thee, drop a tear;
If neither move thee, turn away—
For Hogarth’s honour’d dust lies here.”

career of folly, vice, and gambling in the bloody [x] bosom of self-murder.—Such are thy triumphs o accursed gambling! and yet thy temples are crowded with votaries, though thy altars stream with human blood!—But ah, ye youths of ingenuous birth and splendid distinction; why will ye not profit by your friend's miserable end? Why will ye not suffer his breathless corpse, his self-shattered brains, to warn you from the haunts of villainy and gambling? The morning of your late admired companion's life rose bright as your's; his fortunes were as splendid, his parts as brilliant, and his prospects as gay. In short he was yesterday, what ye are to-day; beware then, lest ye become to-morrow, what he is now. Gaming was fashionable, and he addicted himself to it; gaming was destructive, and he gave his life for it:—his life in the very bloom and vigour of his days, or ever his youth was well matured into manhood [y].—But peace to his wretched memory! for let us not wish to stir up the ashes of the “dead,” except for the purpose of warning the “living.”

But there are also gamesters of distinction, who having surpassed the age and independent spirit of youth, seek every method of supply for their gambling purposes, before they have recourse to the last effort of despair in the resource of self-murder. These, after having consumed their ancient patrimony, study to repair the loss in various shapes, many of them close bordering on dishonesty and fraud, if not on downright rapine, extortion, and cruelty. The rich heiress is caught by the empty sound of title, and the trappings of ostentation; whilst her golden treasures serve on the other hand to purify the stream of her ignoble

[x] —————“ and now in mad despair,
 The furious man blaspheming rends his hair;
 Now moodful grown a gloomy calm succeeds,
 The lips of blasphemy suppressed by deeds;
 To cheat his God, Omnipotence to flie,
 Impious he meditates the “grand fortie.”
 That welcome, dreadful cordial of the sad,
 The fool's resort, the refuge of the mad!
 The lover's cure, the tyrant's surest friend,
 The coward's triumph, and the gamester's end!”——The Gamblers.

[y] The gamester may of all people truly say,
Vixi, et quem dederat cursum “Fortuna” peregi.—VIRG.

blood.

blood. The incongruous [z] match is formed, as unequal perhaps in years, as in education, connexions, and manners; and the female is ennobled at the expence of her happiness and the dissipation of her riches. These also having gone the same way, the noble gamester seeks fresh supplies by feeding on the vitals of his country; by veering with every changeable breath of politics and party. He barter his abilities and his conscience for gold: he procures, by a slavish submission to the nod of power, some rich command or government, in which he may fleece those unfortunate people, over whom he is appointed. But if not able to accomplish thus much, he must submit to an humiliating exile in a foreign country, where he may live cheap, nurse a consumptive estate, and be dead to all the pleasures and comforts of his native land, as well as to all the honours and dignities of that station, which his rank in life entitled him to fill. It is true, he will be joined by many a companion in this inglorious retreat, whose derangements are equal to his own; which, though it may be a sort of consolation [A] to himself, is yet too lamentable a proof, that a general depravity pervades the manners of his own country. But these are scenes of derogation and debasement, which make those, who are obliged to endure them, appear like ships of war burned down to the water's edge, or like lofty oaks blasted with lightning: and what is worse, there is no accident or misfortune calling forth our compassion at the sight, but on the contrary, the strongest

[z] "But why I wed, should any ask,
 To answer is an easy task——
 "Want," "want," my honest Harry.
 What can a man, whose fortune's spent,
 Who's mortgag'd to his utmost rent,
 But drown, or shoot, or marry?
 Of these the best is sure the bride;
 For when once plung'd beneath the tide,
 Adieu to all our figure.
 Full sudden is the pistol's fate,
 When once 'tis touch'd, alas, too late
 We wish undrawn the trigger."

Part of an Ode in the World, N^o 165.

[A] *Defendit numerus junctæque umbone phalanges.*——Juv. II.

——*hic vivimus ambitiosâ*

Paupertate omnes.——Juv. III.

traits of disgrace and infamy. Folly is written in capitals on the foreheads of such ruined delinquents, if they are not rather fit to be enrolled on the list of voluntary [B] madmen.

C H A P. VII.

EVILS TO SOCIETY ATTENDANT ON GAMBLING.—PREVENTIVES OF GAMBLING PROPOSED.—INFLUENCE OF THE MANNERS OF THE GREAT ON THE BODY OF THE COMMUNITY.—THE NATURE OF RIGHT AND WRONG UNCHANGEABLE.—THE PROVINCE OF REASON;—THE ASSISTANCE OF REVELATION.

C O N T E N T S.

Brief recapitulation of the evils attendant on gaming to the individual, as described in the foregoing chapters.—Evils arising to others from gambling;—to the family of the gamester;—to his tradesmen and dependents.—General mischiefs to society in every department.—The iniquity of gambling honour.—The veteran gamester almost irreclaimable; his danger described.—Preventives of excessive gambling proposed; to the female; to the commercial man; to the independent gentleman.—The professional gamester to be abhorred by all.—Moderate play a proper amuse-

[B] Porro aleatores nonnihil addubito num in nostrum collegium (scil. "Stultitiæ," quæ loquitur) sint admittendi. Sed tamen stultum omnino ridiculumque spectaculum est, quoties videmus nonnullos usque adeo addictos, ut simul atque strepitum talorum audierint, protinus illis cor saliat palpitetque. Deinde cum semper illiciente vincendi spe, omnium facultatum naufragium fecerint, in aleæ scopulum illata nave, vixque nudi emerferint, quosvis potius fraudant quàm victorem, ne scilicet viri parùm graves habeantur. Quid cum senes jam et cæcutientes, vitreis etiam oculis ludent? Postremò, cum jam "iusta chiragra contudit articulos," vicarium etiam mercede conducunt, qui pro se talos in pyrgum mittat? Suavis quidem res, nisi quòd hic ludus plerumque solet in "rabiem" evadere, jamque ad "Furias," non ad me pertinere."—ERASMI MORIÆ ENCOMIUM, Op. ed. 1703. fo. tom. IV. pa. 442.

ment for advancing years.—The manners of the “great:” excellent individuals among a corrupt “whole.”—Influence of the vicious manners of the great on the body of the people.—The awards of fashion affect the manners, but cannot alter the constitution of “right and wrong.”—Reason, which distinguishes men from brutes of no avail, if not exerted against folly.—Address to reason improved by Revelation against the deceptions of folly and fashion, to enable us to play the game of everlasting happiness.

SUCH then as have been above described are the miserable effects of deep and desperate gambling on the minds, morals, fortunes, and lives of its wretched [c] votaries. Though the desire of engaging in it might originate (as has been observed) in pleasure and fashion, yet its termination is universally found to exist in the eagerness of gain; which however it rarely attains, but in its stead grapples with ruin, destruction, and self-murder. The professional gamester seems to bid fairest for reaping the profits of play, because he superinduces every species of fraud and chicanery on the habits of close application, experience, and skill. But if the devotees of deceit can scarce (as has been found) reckon upon lasting profit, fair gamblers must be content with certain loss, which (as has been seen) will produce the most dismal consequences, varied indeed in their progress according to the rank and situation of the sufferer, but most frequently ending in immediate or indirect suicide. The female gamester, beside making wreck of every domestic joy (which is woman's glorious point of view) hazards too certainly all pretensions to what ought to be dearer to her than life itself—feminine decorum, reputation, and honour. The gambling citizen not only forfeits the satisfactory fruits and enjoyments of honest industry, but the rage of ill-success either turns his brain or enlists him under the banners of fraud and villainy; so that he spends the remainder of his crazy days amid lunatics and madmen, or ends them in the ignominy of immediate suicide, or the indirect self-murder of the gallows. The ruined man of rank first seeks perhaps a temporary relief in hymeneal gold and in the spoils of his bartered country, or wastes an inglorious portion of his life in voluntary exile,

[c] See the pernicious effects of gaming most ably and accurately delineated in Hey's "Dissertation on Gaming," 1783.

before he rushes self-destroyed into the presence of his Maker. These [D] miseries cling close around the gamester as an individual; and if the mischief ended here, one might be apt to say, he suffered justly, and society were well rid of such an useless and pernicious member. But the contagion of this evil habit spreads far and wide its baneful influence, and many an innocent is involved with the guilty.

The

[D] The following verses (being the Epilogue to "the Oxonian in Town," 1767) humorously paint some of these mischiefs.

[Enter with a pack of cards.]

"Here they are, Ladies!—should these charming packs
Be doubly loaded with a filthy tax?
My card to yours, my lord—a thousand pound!
O charming sport! o might I deal them round!
Yet I will use them, and o deign to list,
Though 'tis no lecture on the game of whist.
The future doom of gamesters to explore,
I, like the sibyls' leaves, the cards turn o'er.
Nor think, ye fair, these books of fate deceive—
These only books 'tis foolish to believe.
First with long staff, short coat, a swaggering spark,
Some gambler-prentice, or attorney's clerk,
His fortune asks. What card describes these cubs?
O, here I have him—in the knave of clubs.
By clear construction of these pips I read,
Thus he will play his cards and thus succeed.
At hazard, faro, brag, he joins the group,
And ends a knave, as he commenc'd a dupe.
And thence his broken fortunes to repair,
At Hounslow first, then Tyburn takes the air.—
Here in the king of diamonds pictur'd stands
An heir, just warm in his dead father's lands.
Now, hey, for cards and dice his elbows shake;
The sympathizing trees and acres quake.
His cooks lament, dogs howl, and grooms regret
Their fate depending on each desperate bett.
Now dup'd, the bullet whizzes through his head,
And shatters dust to dust by lead to lead.
Lo! next to my prophetic eye there starts
A beauteous gamester in the queen of hearts.
The cards are dealt, the fatal pool is lost,
And all her golden hopes for ever cross't.

Yet

The first bitter potion of the gambler's conduct is imbibed in the circle of his own family. All the feelings of parental and conjugal affection are stifled in the more alluring charms of the dice. The wife may lament her widowed hours, the children their worse than orphan-condition;—property sinks apace from bad to worse, and from worse to worst of all. The family are deprived of all the expectations and fruits of attentive industry, of all the favours of rich and fortunate descent; and a single throw is liable to hurl an amiable comfort and her luckless babes into the cold embraces of want, distress, and chilling penury. Horrid as is this scene of domestic misery, yet it is the result of every day's experience in the house of gambling.

Nor will the ruin of his own relatives satisfy the cravings of the insatiable gamester, but his dependents and tradesmen fall under the lash of his ungovernable folly, and feel the severity of its stroke. The sons of frugality and laborious trade tread many a weary step to many an house of distinction, whose lord revels in splendid dissipation, finds ready supplies for the discharge of his enormous debts of play, but who spurns the entreaties of his distressed tradesmen for what has long been their own. There may be noble birth and dignified distinction, yet what are these without the first principles of honesty and justice! But how can he be actuated by these principles, who can sport with the miseries of others, and adding insult often to injustice refuse the payment of a legal demand, that he may be better enabled to squander a property not his own in dissipation and gambling!

Yet still this card-devoted fair I view
 Whate'er her luck to "honour" ever true.
 So tender there,—if debts crowd fast upon her,
 She'll pawn her "virtue" to preserve her "honour."
 Thrice happy were my art, could I foretell
 Cards would be soon abjur'd by every belle!
 Yet I pronounce, who cherish still this vice,
 And the pale vigils keep of cards and dice,—
 'Twill in their charms strange havoc make, ye fair!
 Which "rouge" in vain shall labour to repair.
 Beauties shall grow mere hags, toasts wither'd jades,
 Frightful and ugly as the queen of spades."

But beside the sufferings of the family and immediate dependents of the gamester, the community at large is notoriously injured by the practice of this horrid vice. What pours forth such an inundation of theft and villainy on the public, as the losses of play? what lays so deep a foundation of venality and corruption in those of noble birth, as the excesses of the gaming-table? what prevents the improvement of the understanding—what deprives society of the rich fruits of liberal endowments and political abilities—what makes a wreck of virtue, honour, fame, religion—in short, what absorbs all the generous, useful, ornamental, and social faculties of the soul, like the vortex of the gaming-table?—Can the commercial interests of a nation be expected to thrive under the management of alley-gamblers? can its fleets and armies be victorious under the command of gamesters? or can he be deemed a pilot steady enough to direct the helm of state, who has wantonly stranded his own private bark on the shoals and quick-sands of dissipated folly, on the pointed rocks of gambling iniquity?

But perhaps there is not an evil of greater detriment to society attendant on gambling than the false notions of “honour” on which it proceeds;—notions not more subversive of justice than of common sense and humanity. For who is now a man of fashionable honour?—he, who pays his debts:—“his tradesman’s?”—no;—his debts of play. At the shrine of this honour the female offers up her virtue; at the shrine of this honour the gentleman sacrifices his honesty and justice. He has defrauded his tradesmen by keeping them out of their own property—but he is an honourable man:—he has squandered his patrimony to the distress and ruin of his family—but he is an honourable man:—he has laughed at virtue and made a mock of religion—but he is an honourable man:—he has blasphemed his God—and still he is an honourable man. O unfortunate word! how art thou writhed and tortured [E] from thy true import! how art thou disgraced by misapplication! True honour surely is that which scorns a mean, much more a dishonest and unjust action; true honour is dignified in its pursuits; true honour seeks fame in the paths of useful glory, and employs its time, its fortune, and its abilities in the service of its coun-

[E] See more of “honour” in Treatise on Duelling, Chap. IV.

try; true honour disdains emoluments and titles it has not first merited; and in the more private walks of life true honour is the guardian of innocence, the patron of justice, the friend of humanity, virtue [F], and religion.

It is easier to propose remedies against excessive gaming than to entertain hopes of their application: and yet a point, whose foundation is laid in honesty and virtue, is not hastily to be resigned, because it will meet with but few followers. Some good is done at least by exposing and reprobating vice, by showing men what they ought to be, if they cannot be persuaded to become what they should be; since silence might be deemed a sanction of iniquity. In the present instance, the veteran gamester indeed, who has grown grey in the service, must needs be considered as one well nigh desperate and irreclaimable; and who is scarce to be drawn out of the gulph of perdition by all the powers of argument and reason. Long has the voice of conscience been stifled within him; long has he been deaf to the calls of friendly admonition; while the keenest edge of satire is blunted against his heart of adamant. He must be left then to his full career of infamy and ruin, and his fatal experience must be his punishment. But yet that experience may be used as a warning to others, how they strike on this tremendous rock of misery and destruction. For what a complication of guilt lies at the door of the inveterate gamester! The weight of his personal misconduct would be sufficient to condemn him before his righteous Judge hereafter; but many are the additional crimes of others to be laid to his charge. Such are, the contagion of his wicked example, and the foulness of his cause; the encouragement he has given to dissipation and debauchery in others, that he might thereby promote his own fraudulent purposes; his laying siege to the property of others, and drawing them into poverty and ruin, as well as into many a scene of consequent villainy; the distress he has brought on innocence and virtue; the corruption he has diffused; the madness he has occasioned;

[F] "Honour's a sacred tie, the law of kings,
The noble mind's distinguishing perfection;
That aids and strengthens virtue, where it meets her,
And imitates her actions where she is not.
It ought not to be sported with."——ADDISON'S Cato.

the ignominious deaths, which he has entailed on others; the self-murders, of which he has been in fact the guilty author:—these are crimes of the blackest die, and sink the character of the professional gamester to the very lowest point of depression and infamy.

But there are many, it is to be hoped, whose cases are far from being thus desperate. If the female of condition, who wishes to avoid the excesses of gaming, would be industrious to cultivate the solid satisfactions and comforts of domestic life;—if she would make the regularity of her household her chief source of pleasure, and the exhibition of conjugal and parental attentions and duties the scene of her delights;—if she would be ready to regard midnight dissipation, as the destroyer of peace, and gaming as the bane of innocence;—if she would let her thoughts be busied and her cares employed in striving to deserve the love of a virtuous husband, and to command the affections and respect of an obedient offspring;—if these were her assiduities and these her exertions, she would neither find time nor inclination for scenes of gambling. If integrity, industry, and economy, with a due attention to the decorum of his station occupied the mind of the commercial man; if he sufficiently thought of establishing a “permanency” in that fortune, which he is endeavouring to raise for his family, he would find no resources, no leisure for gambling.

But from the favourite of fortune and man of independence, a dignity of character equal to the eminence of his birth is justly to be expected. The attentions of such [G] an one therefore should ever be placed on great and noble pursuits. His understanding should be furnished from the rich storehouses [H]

[G] ————— genus unde Latinum
 Albanique patres, atque altæ mœnia Romæ.—VIRG.
 Curantem quicquid dignum sapiente bonoque est.—HOR.

[H] Vitiorum peccatorumque nostrorum omnis a Philosophiâ (i. e. Sapientiâ) petenda correctio est. O vitæ philosophia dux! O virtutis indagatrix expultrix que vitiorum! Quid vita hominum sine te esse potuisset? tu urbes peperisti; tu dissipatos homines in societatem vitæ convocasti; tu eos inter se primò domiciliis, deinde conjugiiis, tum literarum et vocum communione junxisti; tu inventrix legum, tu magistra morum et disciplinæ fuisti.—CIC. Tusc. V

of science, and he should drink deep of the various streams and fountains of wisdom. He judges truly when he determines, that his superiority was not bestowed on him, to be wasted in low and groveling pursuits or rustic sports; but that he was born to sustain a more dignified character than that of being a good jockey, sportsman, and gamester. He would do well to consider, that in rustic amusements and the diversions of the field, he may be easily equalled and easily excelled by the mere sons of rusticity; and in skill of gambling by arrant knaves and pick-pockets. But shall he, whose birth and natural abilities justly entitle him to high deference and distinction contend with such for pre-eminence! how degrading the idea! Let the youth of ingenuous birth then leave the efforts of mere bodily [1] excellence to the sturdy offspring of labour; and gambling skill to the infamous tribe of sharpers: "He" should have nobler game in view; viz. to cultivate the faculties of the mind, and to shine in the superior qualities of the heart. Let the images of the worthiest of his noble ancestors be ever before him; let him contemplate their features [κ] till his heart glows with kindred virtue; till he flies to fight the battles of his king and country; till he graces its tribunals and adorns its senate; till he becomes (like the worthiest of his ancient line) first in all social and virtuous manners; best as well as greatest in the order of earthly beings. If his conduct be thus dignified and full of ingenuous worth; if he never lose sight of that just and elegant Roman emblem, which made the temple of Honour only accessible through the temple of Virtue;—if he use the eye of "reason" in all his undertakings;—if he copy after the virtuous and religious pattern of the "First" in station in the kingdom, who is not more exalted in public dignity than private worth;—if thus he think, and thus he act, how must he abhor the iniquity of gambling!—But let all agree in shunning the society of the determined gamester, in spurning all alliance

[1] Ne tu corpus sis sine pectore.——HOR.

[κ] ————— Effigies quo
Tot bellatorum, si luditur alea pernox?——JUV. VIII.

Sic patris memorium venerari, ut omnia facta dictaque ejus secum revolvant; famamque ac figuram animi magis quam corporis complectantur.——TAC. Agricolæ vita.

and connexion with him, and in holding him forth to public [L] scorn and infamy.

Thus would the genius of encroaching play soon shrink his high-towering crest to its proper mediocrity, and preside over an innocent, a polite, and pleasurable amusement:—an amusement adapted in particular to wear away the

[L] Fuit, fuit ista quondam in hac republicâ virtus, ut viri fortes acrioribus suppliciis “civem perniciosum” quam acerbissimum hostem coercerent.—Cic. in Cat. I.

“It is well for gamesters, that they are so numerous as to make a society of themselves, for it would be a strange abuse of terms to rank them among society at large, whose profession it is to prey upon all who compose it. Strictly speaking, it will bear a doubt, if a gamester has any other title to be called a man, except under the distinction of Hobbes, and upon claim to the charter of “*homo homini lupus*.” As an “human wolf” I grant he has a right to his “wolfish prerogatives:” he, who so far surprises my reason or debauches my principle, as to make me a party in my own destruction, is a worse enemy than he who robs me of my property by force and violence; because he sinks me in my own opinion; and if there was virtue in mankind sufficient for their own defence, honest men would expel gamesters as outlaws from society, and good citizens drive them from the state, as the destroyers of human happiness, wretches, who make the parent childless and the wife a widow.

But what avail a parcel of statutes against gaming, when they, who make them, conspire together for the infraction of them? Why declare gaming debts void in law, when that silly principle, so falsely called honour (at once the idol and the idiot of the world) takes all those debts upon itself and calls them debts of honour? It is not among things practicable to put gaming down by statute. If the face of society was set steadily against the vice; if parents were agreed to spurn at the alliance of a gamester, however ennobled; if our seminaries of education would enforce their discipline against early habits of play; if the crown, as the fountain of honour, and the virtuous part of the fair sex, as the dispensers of happiness, would reprobate all men addicted to this desperate passion, something might perhaps be done. If tradesmen would consult their own interest, and give no credit to gamesters; if the infamous gang of money-lenders could be absolutely extinguished; if the people, whenever it shall be again their high and mighty pleasure to proceed to the pulling down and burning houses *, would pass by the repositories of science, and attack the receptacles of gamesters; if these things were done, this contagious evil might possibly be checked; but when it is only to be hoped, that a combination of remedies might stem the disease, how can we expect a recovery, when no one of them all is administered?—Sanctified by fashion, gaming-houses, which out-peer the royal palace, rise around it in defiance; trophies and monuments of the triumphs of dissipation. The wife, whose husband enters those doors, and the parent, who owns a son within them, must either eradicate affection and nature from their hearts, or take leave of happiness for ever. Woe be to the nation, whose police cannot, or dare not, correct such an evil! ’Tis foolish to lament the amputation of a limb, when the mortality is in our vitals.”—CUMBERLAND’S Observer, Vol. I. N° 40. on Gaming.

* Alluding to the riots in London, 1780.

listless hours of advancing [M] years, which cannot be employed in more active diversions. But such a reformation is more devoutly to be wished than probable to be accomplished. For restrictions may be laid, and statutes provided to check the insatiate rage of dissipation and gambling; but whilst our legislators and those of exalted birth are most distinguished for the violation of their own laws; while the guardians of our lives, and property, and social happiness, are the first to deprive us of them all by their own examples; while they, who are placed on an eminence to be shining lights to the inferior community, so shamelessly and daringly neglect every moral, civil, and religious obligation; while they scorn every thing that is serious, make a mock of virtue, and defy their God—what better can be expected than that the vicious contagion will quickly spread from the head to the inferior members? than that the middling and lower ranks will imbibe that spirit of debauchery, vice, prophaneness, and infidelity, which they see so much countenanced and caressed by their profligate superiors? than that their respect and reverence for all filial, parental, conjugal, and social duties (which are the very bonds and ties of national happiness) will be gradually worn away? than that they will become (like their betters) full of all manner of lust and wickedness? than that they will be implacable, deceitful, slanderous, faithless, and seditious; without truth, without wisdom, without natural affection; betrayers of innocence, destroyers of their own and other men's property; rioters in wantonness and adultery; scoffers of the sabbath, scorers of religion, blasphemers of their God, and finally self-murderers?—There undoubtedly are many individuals left of exalted rank in the kingdom, who are truly noble, disinterested, just, and good; but the body of the community, both high and low, is miserably tainted. The putrid gangrene is seated deep and spread wide; the vitals are corrupted, and the die is cast by which our vigour, health, spirit, life, and virtuous manners are (it is to be feared) thrown away for ever.

And yet can the awards of levity and dissipation (however countenanced by high birth and fortune) alter the natural constitution of things? can it make

[M] *Sibi habeant juvenes arma, sibi equos, sibi hastas, sibi clavam, sibi pilam, sibi natationes et cursus, nobis senibus ex lusionibus multis talos relinquant et tesseras; id ipsum utrum lubebit, quoniam sine his beata esse senectus potest.*—CIC. de Senectute.

right wrong, or wrong right?—it can only call them so; but in the great estimate of “reason” their nature [N] is immutable. Man claims a superiority over the brute-creation by deeming himself a rational creature. But what is this distinguishing reason worth, if it be to submit to the caprice of levity and folly? What are its boasted powers, when it shows itself to be more afraid of offending against a trifling world than of following its own dictates? What are its advantages when it shrinks from exertion? what is its value, when it makes the madness of mankind a greater object of devotion than the will of that God, who bestowed it on man? in short, what is the use of reason, if not to resist and confound the maxims of folly?

“ Come then to my aid, thou spark of ethereal mould, thou image of divine impression, thou [o] godlike Reason! and when I am surrounded by the gay, the giddy, and the gambling crowds of fashionable intercourse;—when I am encircled by the thronged scenes of tumultuous folly, teach me to diffuse the full splendor of thy power. Guided by “thee” may the wiles of depravity never allure my guarded heart, or the infectious air of dissipation and wickedness taint and corrupt my conversation and manners! Guided by thee may the gilded baits of fortune never lead me astray, or the fascinations of power pervert the guileless tenour of my ways! Studios of thee, may I successfully encounter the formidable forces of prejudice, folly, fashion,

[N] *Ipsa vitia pro virtutibus interpretabantur.*—TAC. Hist. I.

Speciosa nomina prætexuntur vitiis.—TAC. Hist. IV.

But the “woe” is prophetic against those, who call evil good, and good evil.

See Isaiah, Chap. V.

[o] ———— *divinæ particulam auræ.*—HOR. S. II. 2.

Humanus animus decerptus ex mente divinâ cum alio nullo, nisi cum ipso Deo, si hoc fas est dictu, comparari potest.—CIC. Tusc. V.

Sensum a cælesti demissum traximus arce,

Cujus egent prona et terram spectantia: mundi

Principio indulsit communis conditor illis

Tantum “animas,” nobis “animus” quoque.—JUV. XV.

“ And God said—let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”—Book of Genesis.

“ ridicule,

“ridicule, and contempt! Studious of thee, may I boldly advance the cause
 “of truth, undaunted by the gibes and jeers of licentious levity! Studious of
 “thee, may I neither fear to be wise nor dare to be wicked! but where thy
 “powers, fettered as they are in [P] corporeal tenement, prove too narrow for
 “conviction and too weak for guidance, lead me forth beside the waters of
 ““celestial,” wisdom, and conduct me to the fountains of “Heavenly Revelation.”
 “Revelation will graciously supply whatever is deficient; will raise and support
 “whatever is weak; illumine what is dark and doubtful, confound what is
 “sinful, and exalt what is virtuous. Guarded then by this blessed union of
 ““Reason and Revelation,” may my hours roll on in the delights of innocence
 “[Q] and happy reflection! and when I am [R] about to change time for eter-
 “nity, o may the verge of my future prospect be gilded with rays of com-
 “fortable hope! o may my conscious feelings be a source of joyful assurance,
 “—that I have played my game of mortal life well, and have been successful
 “in winning the great, the important, and invaluable [s] stake of “Everlast-
 “ing Happiness!”

[P] Est animus cælestis ex altissimo cælo depressus et quasi demersus in terram—locum divinæ naturæ æternitatisque contrarium.—CIC. de Senectute.

[Q] Præteritosque dies et tutos respicit annos,
 Nec metuit Lethes jam propioris aquas.
 Nulla recordanti lux est ingrata gravisque;
 Nulla fuit cujus non meminisse velit.
 Ampliat ætatis spatium sibi vir bonus: hoc est
 Vivere bis, vitâ posse priore frui.

Epigram. Delectus. Lib. IV. 57. MARTIAL.

[R] O præclarum illum diem, cum ad illud divinum animorum concilium cœtumque proficiscar, cumque ex hac turbâ et colluvione discedam!—CIC. de Senectute.

[s] N. B. This is a game most earnestly recommended to our notice both by reason and revelation. Every one indeed attempts to play it; but those, who follow their own rules without deigning to receive instruction, when they might easily have it, are sure to lose. It is easy and simple in its management, if we will but attend to the rules laid down by a “perfect master” of the science, in a volume emphatically styled “The Book” (ἡ βιβλος); wherein all its changes and chances are exhibited and exemplified in a clear and cogent manner. It has one great advantage over every other game to recommend it to the practice of the benevolent; which is, that though you may be ever so considerable a winner yourself, yet it is no detriment to your associates in the game; but may even be

be turned by them to their own advantage. It has another desirable circumstance attending it—not indeed to the thoughtless and fashionable, because they have already completely routed that bug-bear “Sunday”—but to others of more timorous dispositions; in that it may be played “seven days” in the week with the utmost propriety and religious decorum.

“This game of happiness (says the writer of the World) is played with three hundred and sixty-five cards, of which every “seventh” or fifty-two in the whole pack, are court-cards or honours; and on the due management of these depends in a great measure the success of the game.”

See many rules and directions for playing the “Royal Game of Happiness” given with humour and propriety in the World, Vol. IV. Nos 167, and 172.

FURTHER ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS IN
VOL. I. AND II.

THE reader is desired to insert the following note in Vol. I. P. 41. at words
“ the principle of life and death does in no case belong to him.”

An ingenious physician now deceased used to draw one argument against suicide from physiology; and his argument forms at least a strong illustration of the point in hand, concerning the principle of life and death not belonging to man. “ Most of the vital functions (he observed), the secretions of the body, the circulation of the blood, the filtration of the juices—in short, what tends in general to preserve life in the animal economy, is not dependent in its operations on the will of the man himself; who seems therefore to have as little right to suspend or destroy those operations (on which his life depends) as he has power to exercise or direct them according to his own pleasure.”

The reader is desired to insert the following remark and alteration, as a note,
in Vol. I. P. 54.

The author is anxious not to have his meaning misunderstood in certain expressions, which may have escaped from his pen in different parts of this work, concerning a partial approbation (as it may seem to some) of suicide in certain cases or situations. Whereas by these expressions he only means “ a comparative statement of the portion of guilt incurred by this or that suicide, according to the motives that might induce him to perpetrate his self-murder.”—A passage of this sort has been particularly pointed out to the author by a learned and judicious prelate of a neighbouring kingdom (to whose remarks every respectful attention and deference is due), as apparently conceding too much to an argument broached in favour of suicide, more indeed than was within the author’s “ real meaning” to do.—The passage is as follows in Vol. I. P. 54, four lines from the end of the chapter :—“ that though some particular instance might allow of favourable interpretation,” &c. which the author wishes may be considered as thus altered :—“ and its occurrence would be so rare, that though one should even allow (what however in strictness ought not to be allowed, since in every case of the above nature there would be a mistrust of the grace and protection of God in the hour of extraordinary trial)—that there might be an instance now and then of more favourable, that is, of comparatively less sinful interpretation, yet it could have nothing to do,” &c.

The following note is to be inserted at the bottom of page 92, Vol. I.

It is worthy of remark, that the judge, who condemned, as well as the disciple, who betrayed our Saviour, were both driven to that despair, which made them finish their lives by the stroke of self-murder. The end of Judas is recorded in the Gospel: the concluding scenes of the life of Pontius Pilate are related by historians to have been as follows. “ That after having exercised great cruelties in his government of Judæa, he was accused before the Roman Emperor, stripped of all his dignities and fortunes, and sent into banishment in Gaul; where he is said to have suffered such extreme hardships of body and tortures of mind, as led him after two years’ endurance to become his own executioner.”—See JOSEPHUS, *Antiq.* xviii. and *Roman Historians* (in time of Caligula). See also EUSEBIUS, *Eccles. Hist.* L. II. 7; and NICEPHORUS, *Eccles. Hist.* L. II. 10.

The reader is desired to insert the following note in Vol. I. P. 279.

The cause of Imilco's death is thus elegantly described by Justin, L. XIX. c. ii, iii.

In Siciliâ in locum Hamilcaris, imperator Imilco succedit; qui cum navali terrestriq; bello secundâ prælia fecisset, multasq; civitates cepisset, repente pestilentis fideris vi exercitum amilit. Quæ res cum nuntiata Carthagini esset, mœstâ civitas fuit; omnia ululatibus, non secus ac si urbs ipsa capta esset, personabant; clausæ privatæ domus, clausa deorum templa, intermissa omnia sacra, omnia privata officia damnata. Cuncti deinde ad portum congregantur, egredientesq; paucos e navibus, qui cladi superfueraut, de suis percontantur. Ut verò dubia antea spe, et suspenso metu, incerta orbitatis expectatione, casus suorum miseris eluxit, tunc toto litore plangentium gemitus, tunc infelicium matrum ululatus et flebiles querelæ audiebantur. Inter hæc procedit inops e navi suâ imperator, sordidâ serviliq; tunicâ discinctus; ad cuius conspectum plangentium agmina junguntur. Ipse quoque manus ad cælum tendens, nunc fortem suam, nunc publicam fortunam deflet: nunc deos accusat, "qui tanta belli decora et tot ornamenta victoriarum, quæ ipsi dederant, abstulerint; qui captis tot urbibus, totiesq; hostibus terrestri navaliq; prælio victis, exercitum victorem non bello sed peste deleverint. Deferre se tamen civibus suis non modica solatia, quod malis eorum hostes gaudere, non gloriari possent. Quippe cum neque eos, qui mortui sunt, a se occisos; neque eos qui reversi sunt, a se fugatos possint dicere. Prædam, quam relictis a se castris abstulerint, non esse talem, quam velut spoliū victi hostis ostendent; sed quam possessione vacuâ fortuitis dominorum mortibus, sicuti caduca occuparint. Quod ad hostes pertinet, victores se recessisse; quod ad pestem victos. Nihil tamen se gravius ferre, quàm quod inter fortissimos viros mori non potuerit, servatusque sit non ad vitæ jucunditatem, sed ad ludibrium calamitatis. Quanquam ubi miseras copiarum reliquias Carthaginem reduxerit, se quoque secuturum commilitones suos; ostensurumque patriæ, non ideo se in eam diem vixisse, quoniam vellet vivere; sed ne hos, quibus nefanda lues pepercerat, inter hostium exercitus relictos, morte suâ proderet."—Tali vociferatione per urbem ingressus, ut ad limina domus suæ venit, proscutam multitudinem velut postremo alloquio dimisit; obleratisq; foribus, ac nemine ad se, ne filiis quidem admisis, mortem sibi conscivit.

The following note is to be inserted at the bottom of page 316, Vol. I.

The following extract is taken from the laws of the Isle of Man relative to the forfeitures of a *felo de se*.

"And Councill of 24 of the land sworn by the said Deemsters the second day of December, Anno Domini 1419 have given for law these points following.—First, that whereas the late wife of John Moore did perish herself, all such goods as were belonging to her are the lord's by his prerogative, except such goods as belong to the coroner, which we say is Corbs; viz. her uttermost garment, broken haggard, all beasts under three years old, her part of the houses, these goods being found free. Item they say, that such costs, as were made upon her burial, to be none of her part of goods, for they were forfeited unto the lord before. Also they say, that the aforesaid woman that perished herself can pay no debts; because the child, that John Moore had by his wife, can have no part of her mother's goods, except that which was given her at the font-stone. Also we say, that all the whole debts should be paid out of the whole goods, and after that the forfeit above said to be my lord's and his officers to be of the free goods."

The reader is desired to insert the following note in Vol. I. P. 321, at the words
 “ some public highway ”

It appears however from the following extracts, that a particular spot in London was formerly assigned for the burial of suicides and persons executed for felonies.

“ On the right hand whereof [viz. St. John's-street] stood the late dissolved monastery, called the Charter House, founded by Sir Walter Manny, Knight, a stranger born, Lord of the town of Manny in the diocese of Cambrey, beyond the seas, who for service done to King Edward III. was made Knight of the Garter. This house he founded upon this occasion: A great pestilence entering this island, began first in Dorsetshire, then proceeded into Devonshire, Somersetshire, Gloucestershire, and Oxfordshire, and at length came to London, and overspread all England; so wasting the people, that scarce the tenth person of all sorts was left alive; and church-yards were not sufficient to receive the dead, but men were forced to chuse out certain fields for burials: Whereupon Ralph Stratford, Bishop of London, in the year 1348, bought a piece of ground, called No Mans Land, which he inclosed with a wall of brick, and dedicated for burial of the dead, building therein a proper chapple, which is now enlarged, and made a dwelling house: and this burying plot is become a fair garden, retaining the old name of Pardon Church-yard.

After this, in the year 1349, the said Sir Walter Manny, in respect of danger that might befall in this time of so great plague and infection, purchased thirteen acres and a rode of ground, adjoining to the said No Mans Land, and lying in a place called Spittle Croft, because it belonged to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, since that called the New Church Haw, and caused it to be consecrated by the said Bishop of London to the use of burials. In this plot of ground there was in that year more than 50,000 persons buried.—

In consideration of the number of Christian people here buried, the said Sir Walter Manny caused first a chapel to be builded, where (for the space of twenty-three years) offerings were made. And it is to be noted, that above 100,000 bodies of Christian people had in that church-yard been buried. For the said Knight had purchased that place for the burial of poor people, travellers, and others that were diseased, to remain for ever; whereupon an order was taken for the avoiding of contention between the parsons of churches and that house, to wit, that the bodies should be had unto the church where they were parishioners, or dyed, and after the funeral service done, had to the place where they should be buried. And the year 1371 he caused there to be founded an house of Carthusian Monks, which he willed to be called the Salutation, and that one of the Monks should be called Prior, and he gave them the said place of thirteen acres and a rode of land, with the chapel, and houses there builded for their habitation. But the three acres of land lying without the walls on the North part, betwixt the lands of the abbot of Westminster and the lands of the prior of St. John; (which three acres were purchased, inclosed, and dedicated by Ralph Stratford, Bishop of London, as is afore shewed) remained till our time, by the name of Pardon Church-yard, and served for burying of such as “ desperately ended their lives, or were executed for felonies;” who were fetched thither usually in a close cart, vailed over and covered with black, having a plain white cross thwarting, and at the fore end a St. John's cross without, and within a bell ringing [by shaking of the cart,] whereby the same might be heard when it passed, and this was called the Friery Cart, which belonged to St. John's, and had the privilege, as sanctuary.”—Stow's Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster, folio, 1720, Vol. II. Book iv. P. 61, 62.

"1339. Ralph Stratford, Bishop of London; he purchased the piece of ground, called No Man's Land, beside Smithfield, and dedicated it to the use of burial, as before hath appeared. He was born at Stratford-upon-Avon, and therefore builded a chapel to St. Thomas there. He sate fourteen years, and deceased at Stebunheth."—*Ibid.* Vol. II. B. v. P. 4.

"The Charter-house is the next object of attention. This had been a house of Carthusians (from which the name is corrupted) founded by Sir Walter de Manni, a most successful commander in the French wars under Edward III. He had purchased, in the year 1349, a piece of ground consisting of thirteen acres, for the purpose of interring the dead, at a time in which a dreadful pestilence raged. Not fewer than 50,000 people were buried in it, during the time of this dreadful calamity; which shews how very populous London must have been at that period. In the preceding year Ralph Stratford, Bishop of London, had bought another piece of land adjoining to this, which he inclosed with a brick wall, built on it a chapel, and applied to the same use, under the name of Pardon Church-yard. "Here also were buried suicides, and such who had been executed." They were brought here in what was called the Friars cart, which was tilted, and covered over with black; in it was a pendent bell, so that notice was given, as it passed along, of the sad burden it was carrying."—*PENNANT*, "Of London," p. 187.

The reader is desired to insert the following passage, as a note, in Vol. II. P. 116, at the words "in the choice of his subjects."

Pope however was very far from imitating the delicacy and judgment of Addison, when he employed his poetical talents in celebrating the praises of a female suicide, in his famous "Elegy to the memory of an unfortunate lady." The whole turn of the elegy (however striking its poetical imagery) deserves an hearty reprobation for its attempt at softening, if not dignifying, the crime of self-murder in a love-sick girl. The following is Dr. Johnson's account of the elegy in question.

"It is reasonable to infer from Pope's letters, that the verses on the "unfortunate lady" were written about the time, when his "Essay on Criticism" was published. The lady's name and adventures I have sought with fruitless inquiry. I can therefore tell no more than I have learned from Mr. Ruffhead, who writes with the confidence of one, who could trust his information. She was a woman of eminent rank and large fortune; the ward of an uncle, who having given her a proper education expected, like other guardians, that she should make at least an equal match; and such he proposed to her, but found it rejected in favour of a young gentleman of inferior condition. Having discovered the correspondence between the two lovers, and finding the young lady determined to abide by her own choice, he supposed that separation might do, what can rarely be done by arguments, and sent her into a foreign country, where she was obliged to converse with those, from whom her uncle had nothing to fear. Her lover took care to repeat his vows; but his letters were intercepted and carried to her guardian, who directed her to be watched with still greater vigilance; till of this restraint she grew so impatient, that she bribed a woman servant to procure her a sword, which she directed to her heart.

From this account given with evident intention to raise the lady's character it does not appear, that she had any claim to praise, nor much to compassion. She seems to have been impatient, violent, and ungovernable. Her uncle's power could not have lasted long; the hour of liberty and choice would have come in time;—but she liked self-murder better than suspense.

Nor is it discovered, that the uncle, whoever he was, is with much justice delivered to posterity as a "false guardian:" he seems to have done only that for which a guardian is appointed; he endeavoured to direct his niece, till she should be able to direct herself. Poetry has not often been worse employed than in dignifying the amorous fury of a raving girl."—JOHNSON'S *Lives of the English Poets*, Vol. IV. P. 24.

The reader is desired to continue the note in Vol. II. P. 146, after the words
"are very disputable," in the following manner.

There needs no apology for concluding this note with the following just and important observations by the author of the *Rambler*, Number IV.

"But the danger of not being approved as just copyers of human manners, is not the most important apprehension that an author of this sort, [meaning one who is employed in works of fiction] ought to have before him. These books are written chiefly to the young, the ignorant, and the idle, to whom they serve as lectures of conduct, and introductions into life. They are the entertainment of minds unfurnished with ideas, and therefore easily susceptible of impressions; not fixed by principles, and therefore easily following the current of fancy; not informed by experience, and consequently open to every false suggestion and partial account. That the highest degree of reverence should be paid to youth, and that nothing indecent or unseemly should be suffered to approach their eyes or ears, are precepts extorted by sense and virtue from an ancient writer, by no means eminent for chastity of thought. The same kind, though not the same degree of caution, is required in every thing which is laid before them, to secure them from unjust prejudices, perverse opinions, and improper combinations of images.—When an adventurer is levelled with the rest of the world, and acts in such scenes of the universal drama, as may be the lot of any other man, young spectators fix their eyes upon him with closer attention, and hope by observing his behaviour and success to regulate their own practices, when they shall be engaged in a like part. For this reason those familiar histories may perhaps be made of greater use than the solemnities of professed morality, and convey the knowledge of vice and virtue with more efficacy than axioms and definitions. But if the power of "example" be so great, as to take possession of the memory by a kind of violence, and produce effects almost without the intervention of the will, care ought to be taken, that when the choice is unrestrained, the "best examples" only should be exhibited; and that, which is likely to operate so strongly, should not be "mischievous or uncertain in its effects."—The chief advantage, which those fictions have over real life is, that their authors are at liberty, though not to invent, yet to "select" objects, and to cull from the mass of mankind, "those individuals upon whom the attention ought most to be employed;"—as a diamond, though it cannot be made, may be polished by art, and placed in such a situation, as to display that lustre, which before was buried among common stones.—It is justly considered as the greatest excellence of art to imitate nature; but it is necessary to distinguish those parts of nature, "which are most proper for imitation:" greater care is still required in representing life, which is so often discoloured by passion or deformed by wickedness. If the world be promiscuously described, I cannot see of what use it can be to read the account; or why it may not be as safe to turn the eye immediately upon mankind, as upon a mirror, which shows all that presents itself without discrimination. It is therefore not a sufficient vindication of a character, that it is drawn as it appears—"for many characters ought never to be drawn;" nor of a narrative, that the train of events is agreeable to observation and experience—"for that observation, which is
"called

“ called knowledge of the world, will be found much more frequently to make men cunning than “ good.”—The purpose of these writings is surely, not only to show mankind, but to provide that they may be seen hereafter with less hazard ; to teach the means of avoiding the snares, which are laid by treachery for innocence, without infusing any wish for that superiority with which the betrayer flatters his vanity ; to give the power of counteracting fraud, without the temptation to practise it ; to initiate youth by mock encounters in the art of necessary defence, and “ to increase prudence without impairing virtue.”—Many writers, for the sake of following nature, so mingle good and bad qualities in their principal personages, that they are both equally conspicuous ; and as we accompany them through their adventures with delight, and are led by degrees to interest ourselves in their favour, we lose the abhorrence of their faults, because they do not hinder our pleasure, or perhaps regard them with some kindness for being united with so much merit. There have been men indeed splendidly wicked, whose endowments throw a brightness on their crimes, and whom scarce any villainy made perfectly detestable, because they never could be wholly divested of their excellencies ; but such have been in all ages “ the great corrupters of the world, and their resemblance ought no more to be “ preserved, than the art of murdering without pain.”—Some have advanced, without due attention to the consequences of this notion, that certain virtues have their corresponding faults, and therefore that to exhibit either apart, is to deviate from probability. Thus men are observed by Swift to be grateful in the same degree, as they are resentful. This principle, with others of the same kind, supposes man to act from a brute impulse, and pursue a certain degree of inclination, without any choice of the object ; for otherwise, though it should be allowed, that gratitude and resentment arise from the same constitution of the passions, it follows not that they will be equally indulged, “ when reason is consulted ;” yet unless that consequence be admitted, this sagacious maxim becomes an empty sound, without any relation to practice or to life. Nor is it evident, that even the first motions to these effects are always in the same proportion. For pride, which produces quickness of resentment, will frequently obstruct gratitude by unwillingness to admit that inferiority, which obligation necessarily implies ; and it is surely very unlikely, that he, who cannot think he receives a favour, will ever acknowledge it.—It is of the utmost importance to mankind, that positions of this tendency should be laid open and confuted ; for while men consider good and evil as springing from the same root, they will spare the one for the sake of the other ; and in judging, if not of others, at least of themselves, will be apt to estimate their virtues by their vices. To this fatal error all those will contribute, “ who “ confound the colours of right and wrong, and instead of helping to settle their boundaries, mix “ them with so much art, that no common mind is able to disunite them.”—In narratives, where historical veracity has no place, I cannot discover, why there should not be exhibited the “ most perfect idea of virtue—of virtue not angelical, nor above probability, for what we cannot credit, we “ shall never imitate, but of the highest and purest kind that humanity can reach ; which, when exercised in such trials, as the various revolutions of things shall bring upon it, may by conquering “ some calamities, and enduring others, teach us what we may hope, and what we can perform. “ Vice, for vice is necessary to be shown, should always disgust ; nor should the graces of gaiety or “ the dignity of courage, be so united, as to reconcile it to the mind. Wherever it appears, it “ should raise hatred by the malignity of its practices, and contempt by the meanness of its stratagems ; for while it is supported by either parts or spirit, it will seldom be heartily abhorred.”—The Roman tyrant was content to be hated, if he were but feared ; and there are thousands of the readers of romances willing to be thought wicked, if they may be allowed to be wits. It is therefore to be steadily inculcated, “ that virtue is the highest proof of a superior understanding, and the only solid

“solid basis of greatness; and that vice is the natural consequence of narrow thoughts, that it begins in mistake and ends in ignominy.”

The reader is desired to insert the following passage, as a note, at the words
“triple-headed Cerberus,” in Vol. II. P. 286.

The following Allegory was written by a particular friend of the author's, and is to be found in the Gentleman's Magazine, 1787, P. 216.

“The ORIGIN of GAMING, and her two Children DUELLING and SUICIDE.

A N A L L E G O R Y.

“Once on a time, as the goddess Fortune, that capricious jilt, was sporting at the shady foot of mount Olympus, she was met by the gay and captivating God of War, who, as they were quite alone, forced her to put off, for a time, her fickle coyness, and receive him to her arms. The consequence of which adventure was, in due process of time, a mis-featured child, called Gaming, who from the moment of her birth despised the rattle, and was quieted only by cards and dice, or a box of counters.

“As she grew up, she was followed and courted by all the gay and extravagant of both sexes; but particularly by men of the sword, by one of whom, whether knight of the post, or German officer, is doubtful, she had twins; the one called Duelling, the other a lad of untoward parts and distorted features, called Suicide.

“The gates of her palace, which was situate in the most conspicuous street of the metropolis, near the king's palace, were like the gates of gloomy Dis, ever open to daily and nightly visitants. The place of her abode was elegant and magnificent; with lamps ever burning at the door; more costly in appearance than the palace of the monarch, which was dirty and “sombre,” and resembled more an hospital.

“Her eldest son, Duelling, was a sprightly, active, and adventurous youth; but fond of picking quarrels with his comrades at his mother's table, and generally in the wrong. He sometimes fought for the fair sex, and would stab, with the same degree of “sang-froid,” his bosom friend or bitterest enemy. He delighted in recounting the exploits of his Gothic ancestors, and, like them, defied all order and justice, appealing solely to the sword.

“The younger son had less spirits than his brother, and met with frequent disasters, such as bankruptcy, loss of honour and friends; which at last broke his spirits, and gave him up to Despair, to whom he was fondly and inseparably attached. In short, they were made one, and have continued ever since to perplex and depopulate mankind.”

The reader is desired to insert the following, as a note, at the words “gaming
“was destructive” in Vol. II. P. 378.

The present writer hopes the author of an excellent small pamphlet entitled “A plain and friendly Address to the Under-Graduates of the University of Cambridge, &c. by a late Under-Graduate, printed for Doddsley, 1786,” will not be displeased to see so large a portion of his work extracted on the present occasion.

“Perhaps

“ Perhaps in the black catalogue of our national offences, considered in respect to their extensive mischief, the subject of the present observations may challenge a disgraceful pre-eminence. Would to God it might be possible to render this assertion doubtful, by placing the absurd, the ruinous, as well as guilty, tendency of gaming in so just a point of view, as to render its influence less prevalent, less notorious! To this end, I am tempted to relate the following imperfect particulars of authentic, although private, history. The generality of readers, I conceive, are likely to derive more benefit from narratives of this description than from regular treatises, or formal and fictitious essays. The intended application insensibly comes home to each of them; and strikes most forcibly where it is most necessary. The use of them, moreover, may be rendered “universal:” the appeal is directed to the “heart” rather than the “head;” the natural rather than the improved faculties of the human understanding.

“ At a public school of the highest character and consequence in the kingdom, Lorenzo, Lycus, and Amintor, first laid the foundation of their future intimacy. Their ages and attainments were nearly equal, and as the same pursuits would naturally unite them in the school, a similitude of dispositions continued and increased that union in their hours of relaxation. Their prospects in the world, indeed, were by no means similar, but their friendship commenced at that happy period, when Lorenzo’s future title and hereditary wealth were matters of the same indifference to himself and his companions: their lustre never dazzled him with a fancied superiority above the competent expectations of Lycus, or the still more humble prospects of Amintor. Lycus, on the other hand, could discern no difference between Lorenzo and Amintor; and when the latter gave his schoolfellows a preference to himself, it was not that he thought them richer, but that he loved them better, than himself; it was not a servile adulation of their higher birth, but an amiable species of self-gratification; it was not the tribute of an inferior, but the gift of an equal. Thus promising, thus happy was the morning of their lives! But I must not dwell, as I could wish to do, on the prospect now before us; suffice it to observe in general, that nature had endowed them, respectively, with very ample qualifications to justify the fond indulgence of parental hope; and surely if the generous, however thoughtless, schoolboy could once be made sensible of the honest exultation, the tender transport of a parent’s heart, on seeing him advancing duly in the path of knowledge, of honour, and integrity, no evil inclinations, no power of persuasion, no force of ill example, could incite him to the barbarous and complicated sacrifice of filial duty and parental happiness! In the present instances, however, reflections of this nature had no influence, and probably no existence, when the poison which imbibed all their future lives was fatally imbibed. Lorenzo and Amintor had unhappily discovered and encouraged in each other a similar propensity of the most alarming nature: it insensibly betrayed itself, at first, in trivial and unguarded instances: the usual diversions of their schoolfellows no longer had a charm for them; and were either disregarded entirely, or pursued for other purposes than that of healthy recreation: some stake must be proposed, some wager must depend upon their issue, to render them worth notice. The amusements, which they once were fond of, now ceased to be amusements, unless they were converted into some species of gaming. The hours which had hitherto been passed in innocent and wholesome exercise, or usefully employed in the private advancement of their studies, were now secretly devoted to the pernicious purposes of cards and dice. Lycus, amongst others, had been easily persuaded to follow the example of his giddy friends, and what he had at first engaged in, from a social principle alone, was afterwards continued from a less commendable motive; till at length the failing of misplaced good-nature was grown into a habit of deliberate vice. Thus dangerous, and insensibly destructive, are the first, the slightest deviations from the line of innocence and moral duty! And however fondly we may
hope,

hope, in youth, to palliate an improper step, by pleading the importunate solicitation of friends, or the powerful influence of example, we always should be sure to manifest more "real" friendship to ourselves and others, by stedfastly withstanding those importunities, and daring to be virtuous in spite of those examples. The limited resources of Amintor's pocket were presently exhausted. His father was a tradesman, whose fortunes were but little able to support even the common expences of a public education; but his affection for an only son prevailed over all other considerations, and he cheerfully submitted to a temporary retrenchment in his own instance, from a generous anxiety to forward, to the utmost, the welfare of his darling child. Little did he think, poor man! how cruelly this much-loved object would soon requite his tenderness, and terminate his fondest hopes in sorrow and disgrace! It was easy to foresee, indeed, the inevitable consequence of Amintor's imprudence: distress, rapidly advancing, besieged, assaulted, overthrew his principles; undermined, insensibly, his early virtues; and drove him to those dreadful methods of supplying his extravagance, which point with equal certainty to guilt and ruin. He was soon detected in an act of dishonesty, and publicly expelled the school. His afflicted father, after some few struggles, fell a victim to the blow; and sunk beneath a load of misery too great for him to bear! It is painful to be more particular on such a subject; nor am I willing to relate minutely the melancholy sequel of Amintor's story, or follow his ill-fated companions through the complicated scenes of iniquity and wretchedness, in which, as they grew up, they gradually became involved. The regular increase of all vitious inclinations, the rapid growth of indulged passions, and the absolute dominion to which they will aspire, are subjects of our daily observation: I have chosen, therefore, to confine this narrative to the following original and authentic letters, which give us the main outline of their future lives; and furnish, in my poor opinion, a stronger illustration of my subject, and a juster comment on the nature and effects of gaming, than any more minute detail which I might otherwise have given. They were written (as will be seen) by their respective authors, at a time when they had dearly purchased the knowledge and conviction of this certain truth; "That a gamester, both in life and death, is of all men the most truly miserable."

"Without further preface I subjoin a letter from Amintor: the date of it sufficiently prepares us for the state to which he was reduced.

A M I N T O R to L O R E N Z O.

Newgate, August 25, 1758.

"LORENZO! the portion of Amintor is for ever fixed! Infamy and death have seized me, as it were, already; and punishments, eternal punishments, await me at the grave! The united horrors of the past, the present, and the future, are more than I can bear. They have roused me, Lorenzo, from my guilty slumbers, and banished a delusive dream! For myself, I fear, the discovery is made too late—Not so, I trust, for my surviving friends. Allow me not to die in vain! May Lycus and yourself (or rather may the world in general) take warning by my fate! The language of a dying man, however simple and inelegant, however wild and inconsistent, may merit some attention. In this hope, distracted as I am, I have resolved to write to you: I have resolved to censure, to admonish, to condemn you. It is the only shadow of atonement, the only token of repentance now left within my power; the only act of friendship I can henceforth shew to you, and perhaps it is the truest I have ever shewn. I must, I will attempt it, though my senses well nigh fail me. Pardon me, Lorenzo, if I speak unwelcome truths: the privilege of anxious friendship will justify my freedom. Allow me,

then, at once to own to you how deeply I am now impressed with a sense of our past conduct. Allow me, further, to excite in you a like abhorrence of it.—Lonely, comfortless, guilty, and condemned, bereft of every former subterfuge of company and wine and laughter, I have found myself at length compelled to listen to those cries of conscience, which we have so often (but so painfully) suppressed together. Believe me, Lorenzo, in spite of every effort, they “will” finally be heard. The gloomy terrors of approaching death will force us to regard them. They have driven me at length, reluctant as I was, to look into myself, and I shudder at my own deformities. I linger through this tedious night, (for though it be the latest of my life, my sufferings must make it tedious); nor can I bear it to continue, nor dare I wish it to conclude. The guilty tenor of our ill-spent lives, the criminal transactions in which we have consented, are crowding, all at once, on my distracted memory: they are passing, at this moment, in terrible review before me, and bring with them a full conviction of the “first,” the “real” cause of them. I see it, Lorenzo, in my early childhood—the afflicted spirit of an injured father upbraids me, as it were, with parricide; and loads the very infancy of gaming with the deepest curses of a parent. Happy had it been for you, Lorenzo, had our intimacy ceased at the time of my expulsion. It received, indeed, a temporary interruption by your longer continuance at school, as well as by the subsequent removal of yourself and Lycus to the university of C! Still, I fear, during both those periods, the same insatuated spirit kept pace with your advancing years, in ample proportion to your power of indulging it. For my own part, I advanced more rapidly in the same destructive course. Deprived of that first happiness, the salutary guidance of a father’s counsel, the kind restrictions of his just authority, the benefit of his experience, and the blessing of his friendship (deprived of it, moreover, through a flagrant instance of my own unworthiness), I yielded to the sullen dictates of despair and shame; and madly flew for refuge to that very vice, which already had betrayed me in the mask of pleasure. When you left the university, Lorenzo, you found me (as you well remember) in the capital; you found me at that time, unhappily for you, initiated, engaged, nay hardened in a regular and desperate indulgence of my former passion; it had gained the most absolute ascendancy over me, and was become, in a word, my profession. I was able, for the most part, to procure a competent but wretched subsistence, by superior skill, or rather knavery, in the practice of it; though, doubtless, I have felt most bitterly the complicated horrors of distress, hunger, and despair. I experienced, no doubt, repeatedly, the opposite extremes of merited poverty and unmerited affluence; nor is the latter, I can truly say, productive of more real comfort than the former;—perhaps it is still less conducive to our promised happiness. Tormented with the fear of losing my ill-gotten gains, distracted at the real loss of them, solicitous to retrieve the past, or ambitious to increase the present, I “never” had an easy moment. It was thus, Lorenzo, that you found me at the period above mentioned: at the same period how different a prospect lay open to your view! You were then advancing into serious life, entitled to its highest honours, and fitted for its first enjoyments: for although you had, indeed, already entered on the same criminal and dangerous career, your embarrassments, as yet, were easily removable by the ample fortune which you one day would inherit; and all the imprudences, and even vices, which you hitherto had been guilty of, might still have been converted to your ultimate advantage, by a timely sense of their destructive tendency. The crisis of your fate was still to be decided: nor can I but reflect with the most painful anxiety, how many thousands of our sex may be wavering at this very moment in a somewhat similar situation with yourself; still struggling, it is probable, between reason and passion, between duty and inclination, between real happiness and false pleasures, between a virtuous and vitious conduct; when if they were apprized, like me, of the infinite importance

importance of the choice before them, they would tremble at the dread alternative—an alternative no longer; nor hesitate another instant to be virtuous and be happy. For us, Lorenzo, the choice and the result of it were of a far different description! In my own miserable state of life, I had long grown callous to all stings of conscience, and dead to every sense of honour. Abandoned, profligate, unprincipled as I was, no wonder that I artfully improved our intimacy to the utmost of my power; assiduous, as occasion offered, to flatter, to encourage, to betray: attentive equally to drain your pocket, and infect your principles; to render you, in short, as desperate and as worthless as myself. You see, Lorenzo, to what unlimited iniquities the progress of this fatal passion will gradually reconcile its votaries! My purpose once effected (and but little artifice was requisite to practise with complete success upon your easy confidence) what crime was not familiar to us! what vice was not habitual! Alas, Lorenzo! it is irksome, and it must be needless, to remind you of them in detail—The “worst,” if worse be possible, is still behind—I am utterly unable to repeat it. I refer you rather to that inward monitor, who registers our secret actions, and will finally report them: O my fellow-criminal, could you see me, could you read me, at this awful hour, the present whisper of your conscience might possibly preserve you from its future thunder! Hear me, I intreat you with my dying breath, and trust me I am “now” sincere! Repent, repent, Lorenzo, as long as you have any being! Believe me, the aggregate of all iniquity is not a juster definition of ingratitude, than it is—of gaming.

“Farewell, much injured, much deluded friend! And if you have a moment unemployed in begging mercy for your own offences, forgive, compassionate, and pray for,

The impious, the lost,

AMINTOR!”

“Lorenzo, when this letter reached him, was rising from the gaming-table, distracted at some recent losses to a very large amount. It struck him to the soul—At every line, at every word of it, he experienced inexpressible emotions—The mysterious and abrupt conclusion, in particular, repeated and united every former shock. Conscience took advantage of the moment to urge him to reflexion. In agonies, too great to be described, he hurried to his chamber: the melancholy sequel may be best collected from a letter which he wrote to Lycus, the surviving partner of his vices and his guilt.

L O R E N Z O T O L Y C U S.

“O Lycus, it is all too true—It is all too dreadful—It is—insupportable!—Wretch that I am to be still conscious of existence! The fate of our unhappy friend, the melancholy picture of his inward agonies, and the solemn exhortation of his dying moments, impress me with unspeakable alarm. Like him, I am at length awakened from a guilty dream. Like him too I awake to horrors inconceivable! They compel me, Lycus, to look back upon myself; to think upon my own past life: they rouse me, in despite of all my efforts, to a fearful sense of my condition:—Yes, Lycus, it is all too true! Amintor has done well to censure, to admonish, to condemn me. Yet why should he admonish me of deeds that are irreparable! Why labour to convince me of the “cause” of all our sorrows; the “source” of all our guilt! Why tell me of the precipice down which we fell! Can I be unconscious of the vice that ruined us; or hesitate to own the poison that we rashly swallowed?—No—rather let me second his reproof; and forward his advice to others whom it still may save. I heartily confirm his sentence! “The gamester, or, in other words, the villain that I now am, may be easily traced backward to the

F f f 2

“gambling

“gambling school-boy.” You remember, Lycus, the first efforts of our passion, indulged, encouraged as it was continually by Amintor and myself; while “you” furnished, in your own instance, one melancholy proof of the rapid contagion of a “bad example!” From that ill-fated period, we cannot but be conscious of the altered state of all our thoughts, pursuits and actions: our minds, you must remember, became gradually divested of those glad sensations, that amiable levity and cheerful freedom, peculiar to the innocence of early life. Uneasy passions, anxious apprehensions, ungenerous sentiments, mutual distrust, and continual animosities, succeeded to that joyous unsuspecting confidence, the produce of our infant friendship; and blasted, in the very bud, those liberal affections and finer feelings of the soul, which constitute at once the honour of human nature, and the bliss of human life. But these were immaterial insufficient sacrifices, unworthy the superior incense, the more ample offerings of maturer guilt. O Lycus, is it not astonishing, that we could ever render our reluctant souls so meanly obedient to each new suggestion, so utterly subservient to each fresh demand, of this insatiate passion? That we ever should attach ourselves to a tyrant so iniquitous; and blindly devote ourselves to a mistress so deformed? Is it not astonishing, I say, that we ever should be reconciled to a vice so unsatisfactory; a state of villainy so painful? And yet—to what an “unknown” length have I pursued this phantom! Yes, Lycus, I have crimes within me, suggested by this worst of vices, which even to your kindred bosom I never have yet dared to mention. Imagine to yourself a wretch, who rather than resist the impulse of a passion which had ruined him as well in health as fortune, could meditate the secret destruction of a tender, an indulgent—parent. Imagine—and behold that wretch. What monster but Lorenzo, what monster but a gamester, could inhumanly have administered the slow, but certain, poison, which brought him prematurely to the grave! And when I had consumed, in the same ruinous pursuits, the ample patrimony which his unsuspecting tenderness had left me, how basely was I tempted to supply the loss of it by a deed of almost equal infamy! The measure of my secret marriage with the rich and amiable heiress of the house of ——— was attended with circumstances of the most refined iniquity. Every tie of gratitude, every law of hospitality, every principle of honour was abused and broken; every artifice of deep dissimulation and deliberate perjury was practised without scruple to conciliate her young affections to a traitor, who to save himself a short time longer from sinking in the vortex of a gaming-house, could unfeelingly involve her innocence in the punishment of his enormities; and no sooner had secured her fortune, than he cast it, with her happiness, to the hazard of a die! Much-injured Laura! what a bitter requital of your goodness and affection! what a cruel recompence have you constantly received for that inestimable treasure, the possession of your hand and heart! what a life of misery were you destined to experience, from the moment of your first attachment to such a monster as a gamester! And you, ye helpless innocents, the unconscious victims of a father’s vices, to what wretchedness are you devoted, to what miseries are you exposed, by that unfeeling hand, which nature had appointed to protect and to befriend you!—But I dare not follow these distracting thoughts. Whatever period I refer to, I am startled and confounded with increasing crimes. Mischiefs more extensive in effect, though they cannot be more heinous in degree; unnumbered aggravations of my guilty passion (considered as the surest incitement to every other outrage on the lives, the characters, the fortunes, and the happiness of my fellow-creatures in general) are rising all around me in terrible array; and doom me, unpitied, unlamented, unforgiven, to the vengeance of offended Heaven, as the pest of society, and the disgrace of human nature.”

Lorenzo,

“Lorenzo could proceed no further—His pen insensibly gave place to a more fatal weapon—In a few short moments, his sufferings, his “earthly” sufferings, were no more!—Ah, whither was he gone?—Desperate Lorenzo! to plunge into eternity by a deed which doubled every crime that rendered him unfit to go there!—

“See, reader, the main outlines of a gamester’s history! and though they may not all be driven to real life exactly this picture of iniquity, very few in fact, I will be bold to say, experience a life more happy, or a death less miserable.

“Perhaps it is now time to draw aside the mask still further.—Know then—it is Lycus—the unhappy, surviving Lycus, who has hitherto addressed you! and though he has indeed requested me to spare him the disgrace of publishing his real name, he has suffered me to add the following short extract from a letter which he lately wrote me.

“The wretched remainder of my life,” says he (in speaking of his former conduct) “I shall dedicate incessantly to penitence and prayer; while the only additional consolation I can ever look for, must equally arise from my hopes and my endeavours to administer a timely warning to the world at large, by pointing out the rock on which I have myself been stranded. And blessed be the Father of mercies, for thus, even thus, allowing me, as it were, to reverse my hour-glass once more (not indeed for the prolongation of my own life, but possibly for that of others) before the lingering remnants become finally exhausted!”

“THE foregoing anecdotes of real life can need no comment. In every situation, we perceive, the effects of gaming are “the same.” The advantages of birth and fortune, education and abilities, only multiply the means of our destruction, and enhance the measure of our guilt: for although the fate of an Amintor may seem more disgraceful in the eyes of men, a Lorenzo will assuredly have “less” (if possible) to plead, in the awful presence of his Maker!”

I N D E X.

N. B. The numerical letters direct to the volume, the figures to the page, and the letter "n" to the notes.

A.

ACADEMY, New, determined nothing precisely on suicide, i. 206. Their doctrines did much mischief in Rome, i. 252.

Addison, his explanation of a passage in Virgil relative to suicide, i. 214. Ungratefully treated by Budgel, ii. 114. Observations on the dying words of Cato, in his tragedy of that name, ii. 114. His admirable rule in writing his lively papers, ii. 145, n.

Ades, its divisions, i. 216, n.

Affection, a want of both parental and conjugal, implied in the commission of suicide, i. 57.

African Savages, gaming among, ii. 300, n.

Ahitophel, his deliberate self-murder, without excuse, i. 91. The same Greek word used to express both his and Judas's death, i. 92, n.

Ajax, his self-murder, i. 210.

Alexander the Great, his censure on his gambling courtiers, ii. 304.

American Indians, gaming among, ii. 298.

Americans, wild, kill their aged and infirm parents, i. 136, n.

Ancients, summary of their opinions on suicide, i. 231.

Annihilation, the best idea the suicide can rest his action upon, i. 65. A gloomy and preposterous idea, ib.

Antoninus, Arrius, his conduct on the Christians' demand of their own condemnation, i. 288.

Antoninus, M. Aurelius, the last of the stoics, says little in favour of suicide, i. 200.

Antony, Mark, his suicide, i. 274.

Apollonia, her martyrdom, ii. 38.

Aquinas, Thomas, his reasons against suicide, ii. 33.

Arenswald, Capt. von, account of, ii. 169. Extracts from his letters, ii. 173. Remarks on the coolness and long predetermination of his suicide, ii. 178.

Aristotle, his definition of courage, i. 25. Censures suicide, i. 167. Ranks gamesters with thieves, ii. 304.

Arria, wife of Cæcina Pætus, her heroism in suicide, i. 258.

Arria, wife of Thrasea Pætus, hardly withheld from accompanying her husband in his suicide, i. 258.

Asdrubal, remarkable instance of his wife's suicide, i. 270.

Asiatics, their religious suicide, i. 134. Difference between Asiatic and European suicide, i. 150. Their gaming, ii. 293. Asiatic gambler stakes his family and personal liberty, ii. 294.

Athenians, their law against suicide, i. 235. Their gambling, ii. 303.

Atticus, his self-murder, i. 259.

Avarice, what species of it assignable to the gamester, ii. 289.

Augustin, St. an opinion of his in his mention of Judas, refuted, i. 93. His sentiments of the Donatists' passion for suicide, i. 292. His general

neral

I N D E X.

neral sentiments of suicide, i. 295. Treated unfairly by Donne with respect to his opinion of suicide, ii. 29.

Augustus, a great gamester, ii. 306.

Axitha, wife to *Nicoles*, her suicide, i. 271.

B.

Bacon, *Sir Fra.* his speech against duelling, ii. 242. His letter against it, ii. 244. His reflection on forgiveness of injuries, ii. 266.

Bæbius Gemellus, his donation of a burial-ground to suicides, i. 265.

Bayard, *Chev.* his conduct before a duel, ii. 225, n.

Beaufort, *Duke de*, his duel with the *Duke de Nemours*, ii. 235.

Beccaria, *Marquis*, his opinion that suicide is not a proper object of civil punishment, considered, ii. 108.

Belleisle, *Marshal*, his endeavours to check gaming in the army, ii. 311.

Benevolence a chief preventive of suicide, ii. 213.

Bett and *Betting-post* at Newmarket described, ii. 349.

Beza, his intention of suicide when very young, ii. 7. and 8, n.

Boadicea, true cause of her suicide, i. 275.

Boissy, *Mons. de*, attempt of him and his wife, to starve themselves to death with their child, ii. 167.

Bourbonnois, *John Duke of*, his resolution to fight sixteen knights, ii. 225, n.

Boutteville, *Count de*, a renowned duellist, ii. 235, n.

Boxing-matches compared with duels, ii. 254, n.

Bramah, character of his priests and followers, i. 105.

Bruce, *Lord*, his duel with *Sir Edward Sackville*, ii. 243, n.

Brutus, *Marcus*, his conference with *Cassius* on suicide, previous to the battle of *Philippi*; and their consequent self-murder, i. 219.

Budgel, *Eustace*, short account of, ii. 112. Paper he left behind him in justification of his suicide, ii. 113.

Burial, not denied to all suicides in *Virgil's* time, i. 216. To whom denied by the Romans, i. 262, n. Of suicides in England forbidden by councils, i. 307. Ancient form of a licence to bury a suicide in England, i. 308, n. Rubric in the *Common-Prayer* forbidding the burial of suicides, i. 309. Men regardful of funeral honours, i. 320. A place formerly assigned in London for the burial of suicides, and persons executed for felonies, ii. 395.

Burning. Wives of *Gentoos* burn themselves on their husbands' funeral pile, i. 112.

C.

Cæsar, his reply on being told of *Cato's* death, i. 177, n.

Calanus burns himself in the camp of *Alexander*, i. 109.

Caligula, his cruelty in gambling, ii. 306, n.

Canadian Indians, gaming among, ii. 298.

Caractacus, i. 275, n.

Cards, the grand desideratum against *Ennui*, ii. 290. Banish all rational conversation, ii. 291.

Their general introduction a stratagem of the ignorant and shallow to place themselves on a level with the rational and wise, ii. 291. Used by the Chinese, ii. 294, n. 296, n. Necessity of restraining their use soon after their introduction, ii. 310. Their invention in Europe, ii. 322. No traces of them in Europe before the middle of the fourteenth century, ii. 323. Doubtful whether of Spanish or French origin, ii. 323. Their figures formed on ideas of chivalry, ii. 323. Trump or triumph suit, ii. 323. Early edicts in France to restrain their use, ii. 324. Soon became a bewitching diversion among all nations, ii. 324. Account of names of suits and court-cards, and writers on these subjects, ii. 324, n. Said to be invented to relieve the melancholy of *Charles VI.* of France, ii. 323. and 324, n. Their introduction and progress in England, ii. 331. Laws to restrain their use in England, ii. 332. Their great increase in England within the last twelve or fourteen years,

- years, ii. 335, n. Various frauds practised at, ii. 341. Certain gamesters compared to some of the court-cards, ii. 382, n.
- Carneades*, his followers, i. 206. His sceptical philosophizing, when at Rome, i. 252, n.
- Carter, Mrs.* her opinion of stoicism, i. 173.
- Casimir II. of Poland*, his generosity and justice to a nobleman, who had struck the king after losing his money to him, ii. 311, n.
- Cassius*, his conference with Brutus previous to the battle of Philippi; and their consequent self-murder, i. 219.
- Cato the Elder*, a saying of his, i. 11, n. His dread of the influx of Grecian learning, i. 251.
- Cato Uticensis*, his doctrine of suicide, i. 176. Strictures on his death, i. 178. Comparison between him and Socrates in their deaths, i. 180. His death not approved by Addison, though so considered by Budgel, ii. 114.
- Ceans*, their custom of asking leave of self-destruction from the magistrate, i. 236. Their law to give the hemlock-draught to those of considerable old age, i. 237, n.
- Ceteus*, contest between his wives which should burn on his funeral pile, i. 113.
- Ceylon*, gaming in, ii. 295.
- Challenge*, Quin's answer to one, ii. 256, n. Another answer to one, ii. 256, n. Sent to Octavius by Antony, and to Marius by a general of the enemy, and their answers, ii. 268, n.
- Charioteers* Roman, divided into four companies, ii. 321.
- Charles II.* published a proclamation against duelling, ii. 246.
- Charles VI. of France*, Cards said to be invented to relieve his melancholy, ii. 323, and 324, n.
- Charondas* killed himself to maintain the dignity of his own laws, against which he had himself transgressed, i. 281.
- Chataigneraie, lord of*, his duel with the lord of Jarnac, ii. 230, n.
- Chatterton*, comparison between him and Werter in their suicide exposed, ii. 141.
- Chefs*, played at by the Siamese, ii. 296, n. By the Chinese, ii. 296, n. Why almost the only game allowed by the Mohammedan doctors, ii. 302, n. The chief amusement of the Turks, ii. 303. Of Indian invention, ii. 327. How introduced into Europe and into England, ii. 327. Its high repute in most nations, ii. 328. A military game, ii. 329. Never used to the purposes of gambling, ii. 329. A game of pure skill, and eagerly followed up for the pride of conquest alone, ii. 329. Requires too intense application for a mere recreation, ii. 330.
- Chesterfield, lord*, Reflection on his "letters," ii. 69, 70, n. Caused an excessive affectation of the Graces, ii. 353, n.
- Cheyne, Dr.* his observations on the English mad lady, i. 367, n. 368, n. His account of himself, ii. 203, n.
- Chinese* precipitate themselves into the water from an iron-tree, under a persuasion that such a suicide is the road to happiness, i. 137, n. Use cards like those of Europe, ii. 294, n. Gaming in China, ii. 296. Cards used there long before they were known in Europe, ii. 322.
- Chivalry*, its introduction in the xith century, ii. 223. Its advantages, ii. 223. Gave birth to a punctilious refinement in the laws of modern honour, ii. 224. Its purpose to rescue innocence in distress, ii. 224. Pursuits of the knights of, ii. 224. Increased the grounds as well as practice of the duel, ii. 225.
- Christ*, Donne's assertion that his voluntary sacrifice of himself was a species of suicide to be imitated by us on proper occasions answered, i. 86. Both his betrayer and his judge finished their lives by self-murder, ii. 393.
- Christians, primitive*, how the practice of suicide became familiarized to them, i. 287. Zeal of some for voluntary martyrdom, i. 288. Opinion of Lactantius on their demanding their own deaths, i. 289.
- Cicero*, Passages from his writings for or against suicide deceive, unless the character he is supporting at the time be observed, i. 206. His private opinions best collected from his Familiar Epistles, i. 206. Allowed suicide on certain occasions, and would have practised

- it on himself, had he not wanted resolution, i. 207.
- Cineas*, his endeavours to corrupt the religious principles of the Romans, i. 249.
- Clarke, Jeremiah*, organist of St. Paul's, his whim for determining the mode of his self-murder, i. 380, n.
- Claudius*, his incessant gambling, ii. 307. Wrote a book in favour of gambling, ii. 307. Humorous punishment assigned to him in the shades below, ii. 307.
- Cleanthes, successor of Zeno*, encourages suicide by his own voluntary death, i. 174.
- Cleombrotus* became a suicide from reading Plato's *Phædon*, i. 162, n.
- Cleomenes, king of Sparta*, his reflections against suicide, i. 276. Forgot his own maxims and killed himself, i. 277.
- Cleopatra*, true cause of her suicide, i. 275.
- Clergy*, Hume and Gibbon's opinion of them, ii. 45, n. and 71.
- Climate*, its effects on the mind, i. 363, n.
- Coal*, its exhalations prejudicial, i. 366.
- Cock-fighting* in the East, ii. 294. In Ceylon, ii. 295. In Sumatra, ii. 295, n. Among the Malaysians, ii. 295, n. In Siam, ii. 295. In Greece, ii. 304, n. At Rome, ii. 307, n. At Newmarket, ii. 344. Its introduction and progress in England, ii. 345, n.
- Codrus, king of Athens*, seeks a voluntary death to obtain victory to his subjects, i. 282.
- Coma*, his extraordinary suicide, i. 264, n.
- Combats, judicial*, ii. 219, 220, n. When first restrained in France, ii. 229. Curious preparation for one in Edward III's time, ii. 240. Remarkable one in 1571, ii. 241. Preparation for one in 1631, ii. 245, n.
- Commandment, Sixth*, contains a prohibition of self-murder, i. 73. Hume's sense of it, i. 78. Donne's reasons why it is not a prohibition of "all" self-murder answered, i. 83.
- Companies*, taste of modern, to trifle agreeably, ii. 290.
- "*Connoisseur*," humorous satire against interested evasions of the laws against suicide, i. 323, n.
- Reflections on suicides, i. 382, n. Humorous bill of suicide, i. 388, n.
- Conversation*, too small distinction between right and wrong, in modern polite, ii. 125, n. Rational, banished by cards, ii. 291.
- Corellius Rufus*, his suicide, i. 222.
- Coroner and his jury*, their proceedings, i. 318. Their inquiry to be confined to the effects of natural madness only, i. 331. Their lenient verdicts not founded in truth tend to countenance suicide, i. 337.
- Councils*, their determination against suicide, i. 299. Their resolutions preferred by Donne to those of individuals, ii. 21. Donne's review of their resolutions on suicide, ii. 22.
- Courage* defined by Aristotle, "the mean between fear and rashness," i. 25. No connexion between it and suicide, i. 25. ii. 87. What circumstances make it laudable, i. 26. Men of courage as well as cowards have destroyed themselves, i. 27. More true courage in enduring than flying from trouble, i. 39. Courage not the only ingredient in true honour, ii. 261. Nor so good a test of civil as of military honour, ii. 262. Depends on vigour of body, animal spirits, and professional habits, ii. 261. Will always meet with applause, but far inferior to magnanimity, ii. 262. Definitions of courage by the ancients, ii. 268. No fear of its want of exertion in republican governments, ii. 270.
- Courtesy of manners* has a more solid foundation than the fear of the duel, ii. 272.
- Courts-Martial* might be erected into courts of honour, ii. 280.
- Cowards* alone do not commit suicide, i. 27.
- Cowper*, his description of low-spiritedness, i. 369, n.
- Creation*, no part in vain, i. 39.
- Cromwel, Oliver*, his parliament passed an ordinance against duels, ii. 246.
- Cubè*, origin of the name, ii. 317, n.
- Cumberland*, his observations on gaming, ii. 388, n.
- Curtius, M.* his patriotic suicide, i. 247.
- Curtius, Q.* the words which he puts into the mouth

mouth of Darius very forcible against suicide, i. 276.

Cyran, Abbé de St. his arguments in favour of suicide, ii. 111.

D.

Dantzic, punishment of suicide there, i. 304, n.

Darius, his words very forcible against suicide, i. 276.

Death, gradations in the shock of, i. 33. Suicide the most dreadful mode of death, i. 34. Natural horror of it a guard to life, i. 36. Philosophic death explained, i. 162. All men supposed by Donne to wish for death, ii. 14. Hume's notion that annihilation is the consequence of it, ii. 65.

Decii, their patriotic suicide, i. 247.

Demonassa of Cyprus, her law against suicide, i. 241.

Demosthenes, his suicide, i. 272.

Deodands, law of, whereon founded, i. 33, n. The ancients had laws of the same nature with the modern forfeitures of deodands, i. 34, n.

Despair the immediate harbinger of suicide, i. 20. Pourtrayed by Spenser, i. 20, n. Mean and despicable, i. 20. To be always discouraged, i. 21.

Dice in Sumatra, ii. 295. Malacca, ii. 295. In Siam, ii. 295. China, ii. 296, n. Warmly censured by fathers, edicts, councils, &c. ii. 310. Invention of the die not long after the age of Homer, ii. 317. Origin of the name, ii. 318, n. Introduction and progress of dice in England, ii. 331. Their great increase in England within the last twelve or fourteen years, ii. 335, n. Much used in the East, ii. 293. Different manners of throwing dice, ii. 341, n.

Dido, her suicide seems copied after an Indian original, i. 114, n.

Dioxippus, a high sense of honour the cause of his suicide, i. 278.

Dissipation, its awards cannot alter the constitution of right and wrong, ii. 389.

Distinction coveted by youths of rank and abilities; but too often in trifles or in vicious pursuits, ii. 373.

Distinctions in society confounded by an influx of wealth, ii. 352.

Donatists, their furious passion for suicide, i. 290.

Donne, Dr. John, some account of him, ii. 2.

Remarks on his "Biathanatos," i. 83. ii. 2, 6.

Druids favoured suicide, i. 149, n.

Duel, a direct species of suicide, i. 23. Its rise in the ages of ignorance, superstition, and Gothic barbarism, ii. 218. A species of ordeal trial among the Goths, ii. 219, 220, n. Its first intention degenerated into self-revenge through the licentious and imperious temper of the feudal barons, ii. 220. Its grounds, as well as practice, increased by chivalry, ii. 225. Its progress not impeded by civilization of manners, ii. 227. Much encouraged by Francis I. of France, ii. 227. Arrived at a formidable height before the close of the xvth century, ii. 227. Severely censured by the council of Trent, ii. 229. The judicial combat first restrained in France by Philip the Fair, ii. 229. Edict of Henry II. of France against duels, tended to increase the practice, ii. 230. Edicts against it by Henry IV. of France, who privately encouraged it, ii. 231. Edicts of Lewis XIII. ii. 233. Famous edict of Lewis XIV. which constitutes the present law of France, ii. 235. Permitted by law in Malta, ii. 237, n. Present state of duelling in France, from Mercier, ii. 238. State of the duel in England, ii. 240. Singular preparation for combat in the reign of Edw. III. ii. 240. Judicial combat in 1571, ii. 241. Prosecution of duelling in James I's reign, ii. 242. Sir Fra. Bacon's speech against it, ii. 242. His letter to lord Villiers, ii. 244. Ordinance of Cromwel's parliament against it, ii. 246. King Charles II's proclamation against it, ii. 246. Bill against it in Queen Anne's reign, ii. 247. No new laws wanted against it, but an enforcement of the old, ii. 248. Great perversion of the verdict man-slaughter, on the duellist's trial for the murder of his antagonist, ii. 249. A

person slain in a duel guilty of his own murder, ii. 249. Laws against it ineffectual, till the principles of modern honour are altered, ii. 249. Becomes private on laws being enacted against it, ii. 250. Ancient and modern duel compared, ii. 251. Nature and grounds of the modern duel opened, ii. 252. Rustic and polite duel compared, ii. 254. Fought in cold blood a great aggravation of its guilt, ii. 255. Particular causes why the duel is reprehensible, ii. 255. Fought in ancient times on public, not personal, motives, ii. 260. Should not be the test of personal courage, because its refusal may proceed from magnanimity, ii. 262. "That a gentleman has no other way to repair his honour," answered, ii. 264. A mode of revenge, specifically forbidden by law, ii. 265. "That it serves to keep young men within bounds of civility," answered, and better methods proposed, ii. 266. "That it is of use to increase personal valour," answered, ii. 267. May be proscribed by republican governments, ii. 270, n. "That it is a general promoter of good manners," answered, ii. 271. Most openly encouraged in the ages of ignorance and barbarism, ii. 271. Indefensible by argument, and contrary to every idea of religion, ii. 273. Not approved by all who practise it, ii. 275. A proof of the tyranny of fashion, ii. 275. Pitiabie case of those who abhor its principle, but think themselves obliged to comply, when called to it, ii. 275. Will of a duellist expressing his opinion of its sinfulness, ii. 275, n. Reflections of an involuntary duellist, on the principles of truth, reason, and religion, ii. 276. How to be discountenanced, ii. 279. Hints of the proper mode of its punishment, ii. 279. Would be most effectually discountenanced by extending the principles of honour to moral and religious obligation, ii. 280. Allegory on the birth of duelling, ii. 399.

Duels, remarkable, in 1547 between the lords of Chataigneraie and Jarnac, ii. 230, n. Between count de Boutteville & marquis de Beuvron, ii. 235, n. Between the dukes of Norfolk and Hereford, in the presence of

Rich. II. ii. 240. An intended one between the earl and bishop of Salisbury, 19 Edw. III. ii. 240. Another in 1571, ii. 241. An inhuman one between lord Bruce and Sir Edward Sackville, 1613, ii. 243, n. An intended one between lord Rea and one Ramsay, ii. 245, n. A desperate one between duke Hamilton and lord Mohun, 1712, ii. 247.

E.

Ease, how far we may consult our own, ii. 52.

Ecclesiics, (a name of the new Platonists) account of their tenets, i. 162.

Edda, i. 148, n.

Edgar, king, his canon against suicide, i. 308.

Education, present mode of, tends to prepare the mind for suicide, i. 9.

Edward III. his fondness for tournaments, ii. 225, 226, n.

Egbert's Penitential, canon in, against suicide, i. 307.

Egyptians, ancient; condemned gamesters to work in the quarries, ii. 303.

Eleazar, brother of Judas Maccabeus, his suicide for the good of his country, i. 95.

Eleazar, who fought against the Romans, his address to his soldiers on suicide, i. 228.

Empedocles, the vanity of his suicide, i. 278.

Employment, its use in the prevention of suicide, ii. 211.

English, their punishment of suicide, i. 306. ii. 24. Proverbially noted for the practice of suicide, i. 341. Number of their suicides not easily ascertained, i. 350. Number of their suicides compared with those in Geneva, i. 359. Particular causes of their suicide, i. 361. Not famous for equanimity, i. 361. Causes of their melancholy, i. 362. Their malady, i. 368. Their peculiar character, the cause of their frequent suicide, i. 371. Both firm and fickle, i. 371. Impatient alike of prosperity and adversity, i. 373. Listless and weary of themselves, i. 374. Their high contempt of death, i. 377. Their refinement of principle, and quick sensibility, i. 377. The freedom of their

I N D E X.

their constitution one source of their want of equanimity, i. 378. Whimsical and capricious even in their suicide, i. 380. Infidelity and licentiousness abounds among them, i. 385. Universal prevalence of gaming in England, ii. 315. Characterized for their love of cruel diversions, ii. 344.

Ennui of the English, i. 374.

E O Tables, when first used, and when prohibited, in England, ii. 317, n. Mischiefs of frequenting one, ii. 362, n.

Epietetus, his allowance of suicide much more contracted than that of Seneca, i. 193. Passages from his writings respecting suicide, with observations, i. 193. Approved of suicide in very few cases, i. 198. Compared with Seneca, i. 199.

Epicurus, his doctrines tend to suicide, i. 169. His doctrines introduced at Rome, i. 253.

Evremond, Monsieur de St. his praise of Petronius, i. 260, n.

Euripides, his reflections on suicide, i. 210.

Europeans, difference between their suicide and that of the Asiatics, i. 150.

Exchequer, court of, probable derivation of the name, ii. 327, n.

Existence, not put an end to by suicide, i. 66.

Externals, Stoical doctrine of, inconsistent with their allowance of suicide, i. 175.

F.

Fabricius, C. his indignation against the Epicurean philosophy, i. 249.

Falconer, Dr. his remarks on the effects of climate on the mind, i. 363, n.

Family-connexions, the injury they receive from suicide, increases its guilt, i. 55. The objection in favour of suicide when committed for their relief answered, i. 58.

Fashion, suicide of the ancients ascribed to, by Voltaire, ii. 107. Its tyranny over reason and religion in the duel, ii. 275. Should be confined to things indifferent, not extended to what is sinful, ii. 278. Cannot alter the constitution of right and wrong, ii. 389.

Fashion, Man of, his mistake in applying to gaming as a resource of extravagance, ii. 291.

Fathers, ancient, some of them approved suicide in certain cases, i. 98. Their sentiments of suicide, i. 288. Donne's discussion of their opinions concerning suicide, ii. 28.

Felo de se, a most ignominious term, i. 317.

Felton, reflections on his stabbing the duke of Buckingham, ii. 179.

Fencing, its inutility to promote true valour, ii. 271, n.

Fiction, observations on works of, in "The Rambler," ii. 397.

Fleetwood, Bishop, explains the sixth commandment to include self-murder, i. 73, n.

Flemings, their laws against suicide, i. 304, n.

Food, animal, excess of it occasions depression of spirits, i. 363.

Fool, the suicide so called by a Manks jury, i. 319, n.

Fools said to be seldom troubled with lowness of spirits, i. 367, n.

Forgiveness, its dignity, ii. 266.

France, its old law against suicide, i. 304. Suicide as frequent there as in England, i. 342. Account of suicide there, i. 342. Present state of duelling there, ii. 238. Regulations of its marshals on points of honour, in Lewis XIV.'s time, recommended, ii. 280. Some account of gaming in France, ii. 312.

Francis I. of France, his determination on the lie being given, ii. 227.

Free-thinking, rise and meaning of the term, ii. 69.

French gentleman, remarkable suicide of a, i. 347, n.

Futurity, an awe of, of great importance to the good order of every state, i. 47. The only powerful argument against suicide, i. 66.

G.

Game of everlasting happiness, ii. 391, n.

Gamesters, no real difference in the characters of professed ones, plunder being their sole aim, ii. 336. Dishonourable methods pursued by gamesters of distinction to repair their broken fortunes,

- fortunes, ii. 378. Certain of them compared to some of the court-cards, ii. 382, n. The veteran gamester almost irreclaimable; his danger described, ii. 385. Professional gamesters to be abhorred by all, ii. 387. A society of themselves, and ought not to be ranked among society at large, ii. 388, n.
- Gaming* one of the most frequent causes of suicide, i. 24. Instance of a young lady who fell a sacrifice to it, i. 29, n. Forbidden in scripture by implication, i. 77. St. Paul's allusion to it, i. 77, n. Its bad effects well expressed by "gangrene," i. 77, n. Its folly and guilt universally acknowledged, ii. 286. Generally the last stage and completion of a vicious character, ii. 286. Passion for it not to be ascribed to climate, because universal, ii. 300. Its prevalence in the commercial line fraught with every evil, ii. 363. Difference between games of skill and chance, ii. 325. Professed gamblers in either equally culpable, ii. 326. Description of the miserable consequences of gaming, ii. 292. An universal passion, ii. 293. Gentoo laws against it, ii. 293, n. Strictly forbidden by the Koran, ii. 302. Its effects found to be similar in barbarous and enlightened countries, ii. 315. Principal means used for it are dice, cards, horse-racing, ii. 317. Its great increase in England, within the last twelve or fourteen years, ii. 335, n. Number of metaphorical expressions taken from it in the English language, a proof of the propensity towards it, ii. 335, n. Degrees of guilt in, ii. 337. Though similar in its effects, may be varied in its progress, ii. 337. Various terms in gaming, ii. 341. Account of an intended suicide in consequence of it, ii. 362, n. Address to females on their love of it, ii. 366. In high life, ii. 371. Its mischievous effects on youths of distinction, ii. 374. A humorous list of officers in the most notorious gaming-houses, ii. 374, n. Gambler's apartments in the neighbourhood of St. James's described, ii. 375, n. An Indian's, supposed account of a gaming-room, 375, n. Recapitulation of the evils of gaming to the individual, ii. 381.
- Its ill consequences to his family, his tradesmen and dependents, ii. 383. Its general mischiefs to society, ii. 384. Iniquity of gambling honour, ii. 384. Preventives of excessive gaming proposed; to the female, to the commercial man, and to the independent gentleman, ii. 386. Origin of gaming, an allegory, ii. 399. Miserable consequences of an early attachment to it, ii. 400. See *Play*.
- Ganges*, reputed the most holy river in Hindostan, i. 125, n.
- Garrick, David*, his epitaph on Hogarth, ii. 377.
- Gauls*, thought it a disgrace to survive their leader, i. 280.
- Geneva*, punishment of suicide there, i. 304, n. Law of confiscation of goods of suicides, i. 338, n. Frequency of suicide there, i. 347. Remarkable instance of it there from a *tædium vitæ*, i. 349, n. Comparison of the number of suicides there and in England, i. 359. Suicide of a blacksmith there, i. 381, n.
- Gentleman, independent*, preventives of excessive gaming proposed to him, ii. 386.
- Gentoos*, their great antiquity, and purity of their original religion, i. 106. Why so strict adherers to their native customs, i. 130. Account of a code of their laws, i. 122. Frequent instances of religious suicide among them, i. 134. An account of their school at Banaris, i. 134. Their laws against gaming, ii. 293, n.
- Germans*, ancient and modern, great gamesters, ii. 308.
- Gibbon*, a passage from his Roman History in favour of suicide, ii. 70.
- God*, the simplest deductions of reason lead to a belief of his existence, i. 39. How far our actions are to be considered as his operations, ii. 56.
- Goethe*, his "Sorrows of Werter," ii. 123, n.
- Gospel*, the moral precepts of the Jewish law extended under, i. 75. Its whole scope and tenor affords an argument against suicide, i. 75. Hume's assertions on this point refuted, i. 78. Donne's meaning in asserting that it allows of suicide, i. 85.
- Goths*, their ordeal trial, ii. 219.

I N D E X.

Government, different principles actuating the members of different forms of it, ii. 269.
Graces, excess of affecting them in consequence of lord Chesterfield's letters, ii. 353, n.
Great, influence of their manners on the community, ii. 389.
Greece, gambling in, ii. 303.
Greenland, gaming in, ii. 297, n.
Greenwich-park, a remarkable suicide committed there, i. 347, n.
Grenoble, bishop of, his remarkable mode of suicide, i. 346, n.
Gundebald, king of the Burgundians, supposed to have first established the duel as an ordeal trial, ii. 220, n.
Gunpowder-plot, coolness of its conspirators, ii. 180.
Gustavus Adolphus, his conduct towards two duellists, ii. 234, n.
Gymnosophists, (the Grecian name of the Bramins) their character and tenets, i. 108.

H.

Hackman, his story, ii. 154.
Hades, v. *Ades*.
Hale, judge, his rule with respect to melancholic suicide, i. 332.
Hamilton, duke, duel between him and lord Mohun, ii. 247.
Hanging, a very usual method of self-destruction in ancient times, i. 245. In England the most usual mode of self-destruction in the country, i. 356.
Hannibal, dastardly spirit of the Romans in their persecution of him, i. 272. His suicide, i. 272.
Happiness, everlasting, game of, ii. 391, n.
Hayley, his humorous remark on the suicide of the Milesian virgins, i. 243, n. His Description of the birth of *Ennui*, i. 314, n.
Hazard, the game of, emphatically so called, ii. 326.
Heathens, prevented by vague notions of a future state from reasoning closely on suicide, i. 105.
Hellebore, suicide compared to, by Donne, ii. 41.

Henry II. of France, his catastrophe at a tournament, ii. 226. His edict against duels, ii. 230.
Henry IV. of France, publishes edicts against duelling, ii. 231. Privately encouraged duels, ii. 234, n. A great gamester, ii. 310.
Herbert, lord, of Cherbury, his affair with Luines, ii. 235, n.
Hercules, his resolution in adversity as represented by Euripides, i. 30, n. and i. 277.
Hereford, Council of, against suicide, i. 307.
Hey, Dr. the pernicious effects of gaming ably delineated by, ii. 381, n.
Hogarth, his picture entitled "Picquet or Virtue in Danger," ii. 370, n. His print of the gaming-house, ii. 377, n. His epitaph, ii. 377, n.
Homer, a passage from him unfavourable to suicide, i. 209.
Honour, its preservation a motive to suicide with many of the ancients, i. 270. Its laws accurately defined in the 16th century, ii. 227, n. Its impulse the general cause of the duel, ii. 260. Its different meaning among ancients and moderns, ii. 260. Its temple at Rome accessible only through that of Virtue, ii. 260. Not to be estimated by a single action, ii. 262. Not repaired by the duel, ii. 265. The prevailing principle in monarchies, ii. 269.
Honour, gambling, iniquity of, ii. 384.
Honour, modern, its principles a motive to suicide, i. 23. Often differs from virtue, i. 23. Detached from public spirit, and confined to personal punctilio, ii. 260. Its composition, ii. 261, n. According to its determinations the virtuous may be infamous, and the infamous honourable, ii. 262. Its laws and consequences, ii. 264, n. The ghost of departed principles, ii. 265, n. Its use to the sharper, ii. 342.
Horne, Bp. his excellent observations on Hume, ii. 44, n.
Horse-race described, ii. 348.
Horse-racing, its high antiquity, ii. 319. The public countenance given to it in England by king's plates encourages gaming, ii. 331.
King's

I N D E X.

- King's plates might be converted to better purposes, ii. 331.
- Hume*, his assertion, "that suicide is not prohibited by scripture, and that the Christian and the Heathen have exactly the same liberty to commit it," refuted, i. 78. His mode of reasoning on suicide often similar to Seneca's, i. 192, n. His Essay on Suicide considered at large, and answered, ii. 43. His Essay on the Immortality of the Soul, ii. 45, n. Steals from Lucretius, ii. 55, n. Danger of his metaphysical writings, ii. 66. Account of him by Dr. Brown, ii. 67, n.
- Hyde*, his investigation of the antiquity of the cube or die, ii. 318. His treatise on playing cards was never published, ii. 322. His motive for writing on these subjects, ii. 322.
- J.
- Jaggernaut*, Gentoo worship of, i. 134.
- James I.* his instructions to his son concerning games, ii. 333, n.
- Japanese* consider suicide as a virtuous action, i. 138. Their gaming, ii. 297. Severity of their laws against gaming, ii. 297.
- Jarnac*, lord of, his duel with the lord of Chataigneraine, ii. 230, n.
- Iceland*, gaming in, ii. 297, n.
- Idleness*, contrast of its effects with those of industry, ii. 355.
- Jebb, Dr. John*, his opinion respecting suicide, ii. 109, n.
- Jerome, S.* a passage of, concerning suicide unfairly interpreted by Donne, ii. 29.
- Jews* thought it a sufficient cause of self-murder, when the future part of a man's life might seem to reflect disgrace on their religion, i. 90, n.
- Imilco*, his suicide, i. 279. ii. 394.
- Indian prince*, suicide of, related by Montagne, ii. 81.
- Indian slave*, instance of a great sense of honour in one, ii. 81, n.
- Indians*. See *Gentoo*s.
- Industry*, its effects contrasted with those of idleness, ii. 355.
- Infidelity*, in proportion to its progress, suicide gains ground in most countries, i. 341.
- Infidels*, very early in the world, ii. 66, n.
- Jockeys at Newmarket*, described, ii. 348.
- Johnson, Dr. Sam.* his observations on the use of narcotics, i. 361, n. His reflection on Hume, ii. 46, n. On Budgel's suicide, ii. 113, n.
- Fortin, Dr.* his opinion of the influence of suicide on a man's future state, i. 302, n. His reflections on the favourable verdicts of coroners' juries on suicides, i. 335, n.
- Josephus*, his harangue to his soldiers on suicide, i. 224. Donne's remarks on his harangue, ii. 31.
- Isocrates*, his suicide, i. 272.
- Judas Iscariot*, his suicide considered, i. 92. The same Greek word used to express both his and Ahitophel's death, i. 92, n.
- Julian, the Emperor*, his reflections on his death-bed, i. 231, n.
- Justin Martyr*, his opinion on the Christians' demanding their own deaths, i. 289.
- Justinian*, Extracts from his digests of laws against suicide, i. 266. His pandects, i. 311, n. His punishment of gamesters, ii. 307.
- K.
- Kent*, number of suicides in, i. 352.
- Knights of Chivalry*, their pursuits, ii. 224.
- Korea*, suicide of a nobleman of, i. 140, n.
- L.
- Lactantius*, his opinion on the Christians' demand of their own deaths, i. 289.
- Latimer, Bp.* Account of his sermon on cards, ii. 332, n.
- Law, Canon*, Donne's observations on, respecting suicide, ii. 22.
- Law, Civil*, maintained by Donne not to consider suicide as a crime, ii. 21.
- Laws*,

Laws, penal, evaded by suicide, which makes it an offence against society, i. 47. Against suicide, i. 299. English laws against suicide, i. 306. Why the laws against suicide generally evaded, i. 338. Considerations for a revision of them, i. 339. Of several states alledged by Donne as allowing of suicide, considered, ii. 19. Donne's opinion of the severity of the laws of particular states against suicide examined, ii. 24.

Letters, familiar, more calculated to do mischief than regular systems of scepticism, ii. 122.

Lewis XIII. his edicts against duelling, ii. 233.

Lewis XIV. his edict against duelling, ii. 235.

His edict against duelling strengthened by the resolution of his nobles to renounce the practice, ii. 279. Gamed much, ii. 311.

Libanius, has many supposed pleadings before the senate for leave of self-destruction, i. 239.

Liberty, constitutional, a source of suicide, i. 378.

Religious, bad effects of its excess, i. 379, n.

Life, whence a weariness of it proceeds, i. 36.

A post or station assigned us by Providence, and not to be quitted, i. 41. Hume's notions on this point censured, ii. 59. Not therefore to be quitted when we please, because we did not consent to it at first, i. 43. Not to be quitted, though it may seem to be a curse instead of a blessing, i. 44. Giving the power of it to the magistrate does not imply a power over it in ourselves, i. 52. Not to be pronounced miserable before the natural end of our days, i. 64. Why it may be hazarded on laudable motives, though not put an end to with our own hands, i. 101. Instances of suicide from a weariness of life, i. 349, n. 372, n. Men's fondness for it, in answer to Donne, who asserts, that men, in all ages, have coveted death more than life, ii. 15. Not too unimportant to deserve God's notice, ii. 55. Not to be disposed of, because it may be lost by insignificant causes, ii. 55. Hume's argument, that if suicide be culpable, so is the hazarding of our lives, answered, ii. 57.

Lipsius, Justus, his remarks on Plato, concerning suicide, i. 158, n.

Vol. II.

Lock of hair, consequences of its being let to flow down by a Malayan, ii. 295.

London, number of inquisitions taken on the bodies of suicides in, i. 351. A particular place in, formerly assigned for the burial of suicides and persons executed for felonies, ii. 395.

Lotteries, publicly encourage gambling, and in consequence self-murder, ii. 358. Their total suppression earnestly to be wished, ii. 360. The first in England, ii. 360, n.

"*Love and Madness*," observations on a volume so entitled, ii. 155.

"*Lounger*," observations in, on the moral effects of tragedy, ii. 116, n.

Lucan, an instance of indulgent serenity in the gradual approaches of death, i. 260.

Lucretia, her death a lesson of the native charms of modesty, i. 247.

Lucretius, his arguments and illustrations once allowed make suicide lawful, proper and expedient, i. 170, n. Bad effects of his poem on the manners of the Romans, i. 254.

Luines, his quarrel with Lord Herbert, ii. 235, n.

Lunacy. See *Madness*.

Luxury, its effects on the body and mind, i. 10. Ancient, i. 11, n.

Lycurgus, his suicide for the benefit of the Spartans, i. 281.

Lydians, said by Herodotus to have invented the cube or die, ii. 318.

M.

Macedon, virgins of, their high sense of chastity, i. 277.

Macer, Licinius, choked himself before condemnation for bribery, to prevent the confiscation of his goods, i. 263, n.

Macrobius condemns suicide, i. 165.

Madness, a confirmed depression of spirits becomes such, i. 4. Is thought necessarily to accompany suicide, i. 324. Degrees in, i. 325. Neither absolute nor partial, necessarily implied in suicide, i. 326. Deliberate self-murder does not imply a sudden lunacy, i. 327.

H h h

Nor

- Nor is it implied in precipitate self-murder, i. 328. Of two sorts, natural or voluntary, i. 330. "Moral" madness in all suicide; but this totally differs from "natural" madness, i. 331. The question, "when is there sufficient madness to excuse suicide?" considered, i. 332.
- Madras*, tragic scene at, ii. 169.
- Maggots*, race between, ii. 350, n.
- Magistrate*, his power invaded by suicide, i. 51. "That individuals have no right to give the power of life and death to the magistrate, if they have no such power over themselves," answered, i. 52. His leave always asked for suicide by the Cæans, i. 236. and Massilians, i. 238. The argument that suicide invades his power shrewdly answered by Donne, ii. 30. Hume answered on this head, ii. 64.
- Mahomet*, in the Koran, strictly forbids all games of chance, ii. 302.
- Malayans*, account of their gaming, ii. 295.
- Malta*, duelling permitted at, by law, ii. 237, n. Remarkable consequences of a dispute of honour there, ii. 237, n.
- Man* ignorant of final effects, i. 40. Ignorant of the importance of his life in the system of the universe, to society and to himself, i. 40. His life not too unimportant to deserve the notice of the Deity; in answer to Hume, ii. 55. How far his actions the operations of God, in answer to Hume, ii. 56.
- Manks*, verdict of their jury on a suicide, i. 319, n. Their law relative to the forfeitures of a *felo-de-se*, ii. 394.
- Marcellinus*, remarkable story in Seneca of his suicide, i. 189, n. and i. 258.
- Martial*, his epigram on suicides, who killed themselves through fear of being put to death, i. 259, n.
- Martyrdom*, sought by some Christians, and why, i. 287. Eagerness of, in the first Christians asserted by Donne to be a relic of the ancient propensity to suicide, ii. 15. Christian, difference between a desire of it and the principle of Heathen suicide, ii. 16.
- Massi, M. Constand de*, his history of duelling, ii. 225, n.
- Massilians*, their law respecting suicide, i. 238.
- Matter*, Hume's conclusion "that suicide is no offence against God, because it is no offence to encroach on the general laws of matter and motion," proved erroneous, ii. 53.
- Melancholy*, suicide proceeding from, i. 332. When its degrees are sufficient to excuse the legal guilt of suicide, i. 332. The cause of suicide in England and Geneva, i. 350.
- Merchants*, distinctions between them and gentlemen by birth, much confounded by an influx of wealth, ii. 352. Mischiefs of their imitating gentlemen, ii. 353. Preventives of excessive gambling proposed to, ii. 386.
- Mercier*, his reflections on the causes of suicide in France, i. 345. His account of duelling in France, ii. 238.
- Mettus Fuffetius*, his proposal to Tullus Hostilius explains the general cause of the single combat in ancient times, ii. 260, n.
- Migration*, suicide improperly compared to, i. 50. Beccaria's argument on such comparison answered, ii. 110.
- Miletus, virgins of*, their rage for suicide, i. 242. Their punishment, i. 242.
- Military glory*, why in less general estimation in these times than formerly, ii. 86.
- Military ideas* not to be too warmly espoused in free countries, ii. 269.
- Milton*, his argument against suicide, i. 67, n.
- Mithridates*, his suicide, i. 273.
- Mohun, lord*, duel between him and duke Hamilton in 1712, ii. 247.
- Montagne*, his opinion of what the ancients thought of suicide, ii. 79. His relation of the suicide of an Indian prince, ii. 81. His character of the French with respect to duelling, ii. 233.
- Montesquieu*, his summary of the circumstances productive of Roman suicide, i. 256, n. Arguments for and against suicide in his "Persian Letters," ii. 84.—in his "Grandeur des Romains," &c. ii. 86. His definition of the principles of different governments, ii. 269.

Moore, Dr. endeavours to account for the English *Ennui*, i. 375, n.
Mordaunt, Col. Philip, committed suicide from a distaste of life, i. 372, n.
More, Sir Thomas, law concerning suicide in his "Utopia," ii. 78.
Muralt, his reflections on the character of the English, i. 371, n. 377, n.
Murder, avoiding the hazard of its commission on another through violence of passion, no excuse for self-murder, ii. 163.

N.

Nature, suicide not deemed a sin against, by Donne, ii. 11. Donne's notions of the law of nature incorrect, ii. 12.
Nemoures, duke de, his duel with the duke de Beaufort, ii. 235.
Nerva, Cocceius, his suicide by voluntary abstinence, i. 261.
Nervous disorders, their causes in England, i. 362. In the extreme most deplorable, i. 368. From their frequency in England styled the English Malady, i. 368. In some degree known and observed by the Greek, Roman, and Arabian physicians, i. 369, n.
Newmarket a fruitful field for the display of gambling abilities, ii. 344. Fame gained there highly coveted, ii. 346. Its vicinity to one of our universities much to be lamented, ii. 347. Its jockeys described, ii. 348. Race there described, ii. 348. Description of a bett, and the betting-post, ii. 349. Losses on the turf attempted to be repaired at the gambling-table, ii. 350. Pandæmonium, or little hell, there described, ii. 350. The ruin of princely fortunes and virtuous principles, ii. 351.
Nicocles, his suicide, i. 271.
Ninachetuen, his suicide, as related by Montagne, ii. 81.
 "November, Progress of," an ode, i. 352, n.

O.

Odin, suicide among his worshippers in Scandinavia, i. 144. Merely the God of War, i.

145, n. His hall, i. 146, 148. Tradition of his public self-murder, i. 147.
Officers of the army, address to, respecting their discountenancing the duel, ii. 281.
Olympic charioteers and modern jockeys compared, ii. 320.
Olympiodorus, his sentiments on suicide, i. 166.
Ordeal trial, ii. 219. By duel admitted in cases of property, ii. 241, n.
Otho, his suicide to prevent the further effusion of Roman blood, i. 283. Remarkable instance of the affection and resolution of one of his private foldiers, i. 283, n.

P.

Pætus, Cæcina, his suicide, i. 258, n.
Pætus, Thrasea, his suicide, i. 258, n.
Pain, mere bodily, why seldom productive of suicide in the present times, though often among the ancients, i. 17. Mental, of two sorts, i. 17. Made a reason for exhortation to commit suicide in Sir Thomas More's Utopia, ii. 78. Pain and the fear of it considered by Montagne as the most excusable incitements to suicide, ii. 82.
Palamedes said to have invented the cube or die, ii. 318.
Panthea, her disinterested suicide, i. 114, n.
Pardon church-yard, a place in London formerly assigned for the burial of suicides and persons executed for felonies, ii. 395.
Parliament, Oliver Cromwell's, passed an ordinance against duels, ii. 246.
Parts, quick, difference between them and good sense; preference due to the latter, ii. 371. Not to be trusted but under the guidance of discretion and prudence, ii. 372. Being seldom accompanied by application, especially in early life, prevent all solid improvement, ii. 373.
Parysatis, queen of Persia, her cruel use of dice, ii. 302, n.
Pelagia, a virgin-suicide, i. 293.

H h h 2

Persians,

Persians, ancient, luxury of their kings, i. 11, n.

 Addicted to gaming, ii. 301.

Persians, modern, evade the restriction from gaming in the Koran, ii. 302.

Peter Martyr, his reason against suicide, ii. 30.

Petronius, his self-murder, i. 259.

Philip the fair, first restrained judicial combats in France, ii. 229.

Philosopher, his life compared with that of an oyster on Hume's idea, ii. 55.

Philosophers, ancient, those who entertained the most rational ideas of the nature of God and man, proportionably condemned suicide, i. 105. Summary of their opinions on suicide, i. 231. Hume's assertion that they all approved of suicide, refuted, ii. 50.

Philosophers, modern, their wise man, ii. 72.

Philosophy, human, applied to religious subjects, apt to confound us, ii. 46.

Pickering, Amelia, extract from her poem entitled "Sorrows of Werter," ii. 151, n.

Pilate, Pontius, his own executioner, ii. 393.

Plato, his opinion of suicide, i. 157.

Platonists, New, their opinion of suicide, i. 161.

Play, suicide of a young lady who lost her fortune by, i. 29, n. Definition of it, ii. 287. Ancient and modern meaning of the word, ii. 287. Its abuse condemned, but not its use, ii. 288. Has nothing to do with the advancement of sensual or intellectual pleasures, ii. 288. Equally pursued in childhood and old age, and never cloy, ii. 289. Its principal sources are love of gain and pride of conquest, ii. 289. Its prevalence amid polite circles assignable to indolent and pleasurable habits; its excess to the hopes of gain, in order to support luxurious modes of living, ii. 290. Inconveniencies and ruin to the female sex from an excessive love of it, ii. 368. Moderate, a proper amusement for advancing years, ii. 388. See *Gaming*.

Pliny the elder, extracts from, concerning suicide, i. 220.

Pliny the younger, why he wrote so mildly of the Christians to Trajan, i. 99. His sentiments of suicide, i. 222.

Plotinus condemns suicide, i. 163.

Pope, A. his indelicacy and want of judgment in his "Elegy to the Memory of an unfortunate Lady," ii. 396.

Porphyry condemns suicide, i. 164.

Portia, her suicide, i. 258.

Principle, suicide founded on a total want or a too great refinement of, i. 8.

Prisoners, their keepers punished for their suicide by the Roman law, i. 266. ii. 20.

Professions, how far justifiable to follow such as endanger our lives, i. 101.

Property, confiscation of, in consequence of suicide, introduced into England, i. 310. Hence the general evasion of the laws against suicide, i. 338.

Providence, laws of, Hume's sophistry respecting them, ii. 50.

Ptolemy, his mode of suicide, i. 271, n.

Punishment, suicide injurious to society by the assumption of private, i. 51. Donne's reply to this argument answered, ii. 30. Guilt of the self-murderer who evades the punishment due to his crimes, i. 54.—especially if due to private crimes, i. 56. The marquis Beccaria's supposition that suicide does not admit of civil punishment, answered, ii. 108.

Purkis, Dr. quotation from his Commencement Sermon, ii. 44, n.

Pyrrho, his extraordinary reason against suicide, i. 233.

Pyrrhus, his method of endeavouring to corrupt the Romans, i. 249.

Pythagoras condemns suicide, i. 151.

Q.

Quail-fighting in China, ii. 296, n. At Rome, ii. 307, n.

Quin, the Player, his reply to a challenge, ii. 256, n.

Quintilian, his 4th declamation grounded on the idea of asking leave of the senate to destroy oneself, i. 239.

R.

- Race* of horses described, ii. 348.
- "*Rambler*," observations in, on works of fiction, ii. 397.
- Ramsay*, remarkable story related by him of an Indian slave, ii. 81, n.
- Razis*, his suicide full of horror and a marvellous story, i. 95.
- Rea, lord*, preparation for judicial combat between him and one Ramsay, ii. 245, n.
- Reason* of no avail in distinguishing us from brutes, if not exerted against folly, ii. 390. Address to Reason improved by Revelation against the deceptions of folly and fashion, to enable us to play the game of everlasting happiness, ii. 390.
- Reay, Miss*, observations on letters supposed to have passed between her and Mr. Hackman, ii. 155.
- Refinement*, an age of the greatest, never the most virtuous, ii. 338.
- Regulus*, his conduct, i. 248.
- Religion*, the Jews thought a probability of a man's future life reflecting disgrace on the true religion, a sufficient cause of self-murder, i. 90, n.
- Religion of Nature*, passage from an Apology for professing it in the 18th century, ii. 72.
- Rencontre*, meaning of that term in France, ii. 236, n.
- Revelation*, its assistance to enable us to play the game of everlasting happiness, ii. 391.
- Rhaam Chund*, his wife burned herself on his funeral pile, i. 114.
- Right and wrong*, the distinctions of, almost swept away in polite conversation, ii. 125, n.
- Riphæan mountains*, stories of their inhabitants, i. 143.
- Robeck, the Swede*, short account of, and his book in favour of suicide, ii. 74.
- Romans*, the conduct of their senate after the battle of Cannæ, i. 2, n. The rise and fall of their liberty marked by two distinguished instances of self-murder, i. 181, n. Why suicide called the

Roman death, i. 245. Seldom committed suicide in the early ages of the state but from principles of private or public virtue, i. 247. Restrained from it by a reverence for religion, i. 247. Causes of the growth of suicide in Rome, i. 250. Prevalence of suicide under the first emperors, i. 257. Instances of suicide in both sexes, i. 257. To whom they denied burial, i. 262, n. Rise of their laws against suicide, i. 264. Their laws against suicide, i. 266. Their mean revenge on Hannibal, i. 272. Why their law did not punish suicide as a crime in itself, ii. 22. A passage from Gibbon concerning their suicide, ii. 70. Suicide practised by them in the times of effeminacy, luxury, and despotism, ii. 87. Their gaming with dice, ii. 305, n. Chariot-racing in the times of the emperors, ii. 321.

Roussseau, two letters on suicide in his "*Nouvelle Helois*," ii. 87.

S.

- Sackville, Sir Edw.* duel between him and lord Bruce, ii. 243, n.
- Salisbury, Wm. de Montacute, earl of*, singular preparation for combat between him and Robert bishop of Salisbury, ii. 240.
- Salvini*, a fictitious story of, in "*Love and Madness*," ii. 160, n.
- Samson*, the first example of suicide in scripture, i. 88. Lost his life with a view to the glory of the true God, i. 89.
- Sancrats*, Siamese priests, i. 137, n.
- Sandwich-islands*, gaming in, ii. 297, n.
- Sardanapalus*, his luxurious mode of self-murder, i. 273. Inscription on his tomb, i. 274, n.
- Savage, Rich.* his personification of suicide, i. 19, n.
- Savage nations*, all maintained a notion that what was dear or useful in this world, would be equally so in the next, i. 120.
- Saul*, his suicide had nothing glorious in it, i. 90.
- Savoy*, punishment of suicide there, i. 305, n.
- Scaldic poetry*, i. 148, n.

Scandi-

- Scandinavians*, their origin, i. 144, n. Their delight in war and carnage, i. 146.
- "*School for Scandal*," that comedy censured as to its moral tendency, ii. 145, n.
- Scripture* contains no direct prohibition of suicide, totidem verbis, unless it be implied in the sixth commandment, i. 72. Many acknowledged sins not mentioned by name in it, i. 77, 81. Hume's assertion that it no where forbids suicide, refuted, i. 78. Supposed by Donne to permit suicide, by fair implication, by precept, and by example, i. 83. Passages in, of more force against suicide than those produced by Donne to allow it, i. 87. Examples recorded therein of suicide, i. 88. not of the best characters, i. 96. Nothing to be inferred in favour of suicide from its not passing an immediate censure on examples of it, i. 96.
- Scythians*, their tribes all favourers of suicide, i. 141.
- Self-interest*, suicide an offence against, i. 62. Hume's arguments that it is not, answered, ii. 64.
- Self-preservation*, suicide contrary to the principle of, i. 35. How far to be the guide of our actions, i. 37. Donne's ideas of it proved incorrect, ii. 12. When to yield to higher motives, in answer to Hume, ii. 57.
- Seneca*, the most copious writer of antiquity in favour of suicide, i. 181. Yet is influenced by domestic arguments against it, i. 184. His arguments in favour of suicide of no account, i. 191. A great imitator of Socrates in the circumstances of his accelerated death, i. 192. Compared with Epictetus, i. 199. His reflections on the ill effects of luxury, i. 364, n.
- Sense, good*, and quick parts, difference between them, ii. 371.
- Sensibility*, not to be denied to a writer who endeavours to show the immoral tendency of any work replete with it, ii. 124. A term (as often used) deceitful in the extreme, ii. 225. Danger of giving it a preference to reason, ii. 129.
- Sertorius*, his troops sacrificed their lives on his death, i. 280.
- Sexagenarii*, the appellation explained in answer to Donne, ii. 19.
- Shakespeare*, his arguments against suicide, i. 66, n.
- Shame*, many suicides among the ancients to avoid it, i. 270.
- Sharps* described; totally callous to all feelings of humanity, ii. 337. The cause of their easy admission into polite assemblies, ii. 338. Why called Rooks, ii. 338, n. Cool and temperate themselves, promote vice and dissipation in others, ii. 339. The earnestness with which they pursue their iniquitous business, ii. 339. Encouragements they give to, and frauds they practise on, their dupes, ii. 340. The use they make of modern ideas of honour, ii. 342. Their villainy compared with that of the usurer, ii. 342. No princely fortune can stand against their coalition, ii. 343. The sharper generally a ruined man before he practises on others, ii. 343. His own gains unstable, but certain of one important loss, "heaven," ii. 343.
- Sherlock, Dr. Wm.* his opinion of the sinfulness of suicide, i. 302, n.
- Siamese*, suicide among them, i. 137. Their gaming, ii. 295.
- Silius Italicus*, his suicide, i. 223, n.
- Slaves*, hard case of, when commanded by their masters to kill them, i. 274, n.
- Smith, Charlotte*, her sonnets noticed, ii. 151, n.
- Smith, Richard, and his family*, their mixt murder and suicide, ii. 165.
- Society*, how injured by suicide, i. 47. Donne's reasoning on this point refuted, ii. 33. Hume's arguments answered, ii. 62.
- Socrates* condemns suicide, i. 152.
- Soldiers*, how their attempting suicide was punished by the Roman law, i. 266. Account of two French soldiers who killed themselves, i. 342, n.
- Sophocles*, his reflections on suicide, i. 210.
- Sophonisba*, cause of her suicide, i. 275.
- Spaniards*, account of their gaming, ii. 313.
- "*Spectator*," story from, of two negroes who first murdered their mistress, and then themselves, confirmed by Ramsay, ii. 83, n.
- Spenser*,

Spenser, his pourtrait of despair, i. 20, n.
Spirituos Liquors, excessive use of, tends to destroy all equanimity of temper, i. 364.
Starving a very usual mode of suicide among the Romans, i. 259.
Stoics, encomium on their philosophy, i. 173. Stoicism briefly described by Tacitus, i. 174, n. Suicide one of their favourite doctrines, i. 174. Was to be the deliverance of their wise men from all embarrassment, i. 174. Yet this doctrine contrary to their notion of externals, i. 175. Wrote more in favour of suicide, than any other sect, but deal more in assertion than argument, i. 176. In suicide never looked beyond themselves, i. 176. Summary of their doctrine on suicide, i. 204. Their philosophy professed by some of the most admired names of antiquity, i. 176. The cause of much suicide in Rome, i. 255.
Sterne, his writings censured, ii. 129, n.
Stock-jobbing, its frauds and discordant scenes, ii. 361.
Stories, danger of publishing true ones, if only drawn up to excite pity on behalf of some act of violent passion, ii. 149.
Stratford, bishop, bought and dedicated a piece of ground in London, which served for the burial of suicides and persons executed for felonies, ii. 395.
Sufferings, bodily and mental, the general causes of immediate suicide, i. 16.
Suicide, different acceptations of the term, i. 2. Confined in this inquiry to procuring an immediate self-destruction by some method of violence, i. 2. An increasing evil, i. 3. Distinction between its criminal and innocent commission, i. 3. Its commission does not always imply guilt, i. 4. Not always to be imputed to madness, i. 4. Inquiry never made into its guilt or innocence in itself, but only whether lunacy can excuse it, i. 5. Degrees of its guilt, i. 5. Some general inducements to it, not arising from previous guilt, i. 5. Inducements from previous guilt, i. 5. Man unable to decide with precision on each particular case, i. 7. Arises from too strong an

impression on the mind, and is grounded on a want, or too great a refinement, of principle, i. 8. Sudden and outrageous, whence it arises, i. 8. Cool and deliberate, its source, i. 8. Distant causes which prepare the mind for outrageous suicide, i. 9. Incitements to "immediate" suicide from bodily or mental sufferings, or both, i. 16. Why seldom committed from bodily pain in the present times, though often so among the ancients, i. 17. When it proceeds from mental pain suffered through the conduct of others, not blameable as to its producing cause, i. 17. When it proceeds from mental pain arising from conscious guilt, pride, &c. blameable with respect to both cause and effect, i. 19. Personified by Savage in his "Wanderer," i. 19, n. Despair its immediate incentive, i. 20. Has not always an excuse from the prospect of advantage or pleasure, i. 23. The principles of modern honour lead to it, i. 23. The duel a direct species of it, i. 23. Gambling a cause of it, i. 24. If a crime when voluntary, a much greater when committed against our own inclination, i. 25. A compound of fear and rashness, and has no connexion with courage, i. 25. and ii. 87. Instance of its prevention by a poor man, i. 30, n. the most dreadful of all deaths i. 34. Justly abhorred, because contrary to the first principle of self-preservation, i. 35. and ii. 12. "That death is often coveted rather than life," answered, i. 36. "That self-preservation is not of universal obligation," answered, i. 37. Inconsistent with our duty to God as our natural Governor, i. 39. The suicide flies from the part assigned him by his natural Governor, i. 41. and ii. 59. Inconsistent with our duty to God as our moral Governor, i. 42. Its impatience overturns all submission in a state of probation, i. 42. Offensive to our moral Governor by the defiance of his laws, by its injustice to society, and injury to ourselves, i. 42. "That we are at liberty to quit life because we did not consent to it," answered, i. 43. "That if life, which was intended as a blessing

blessing, prove a curse, God will forgive us for getting rid of 'it,' answered, i. 44. An offence against the good order of society, i. 47. Evades the power of enforcing penal laws, which is of the utmost consequence to society, i. 47. Its imagined lawfulness or "principle," an encouragement to every vice, i. 47. Injurious to society by decreasing the number of citizens, i. 50. Injurious to society by its desertion of all civil duties, i. 50. "That it is only a migration from one's country," answered, i. 50. and ii. 110. Injurious to society by the assumption of private punishment, i. 51. Murder, because no citizen is to be put to death but by the sentence of public justice, i. 51. Increased guilt of the self-murderer, who evades the punishment due to his crimes, i. 52. and 54. "That individuals have no right to give the power of life and death to the magistrate, if they have no such power over themselves," answered, i. 52. Its guilt highly aggravated by the injury it does to private connexions, i. 55.—especially when committed in consequence of private crimes, i. 56. Its principle destroys domestic peace, i. 56. Its commission implies a want of parental and conjugal affection, i. 57. Cruel as it causes shame to those in a near degree of connection, i. 58. "That it is a relief to an injured family from the further evil effects of our follies and vices," answered, i. 58. Its guilt, though caused by undeserved sufferings, i. 59. Self-interest not consulted by it, i. 62. Though always committed on selfish principles, yet terminates self-interest in this world, i. 63. The idea of annihilation most favourable to suicide, i. 65. The awe of futurity the only powerful argument against it, i. 66. The suicide deceives himself in the application of the word "existence," i. 66. The suicide hurts his self-interest in another world, particularly by the "manner" of his death, i. 67. The special guilt of suicide accumulated on account of the "many" duties against which it offends, i. 68. Admits of extenuation or aggravation from circumstances, i. 68. No

general conclusion in its favour from a few particular instances, i. 69. No partial allowance to be made of it, i. 69. No immediate prohibition of it in the Bible, unless implied in the sixth Commandment, i. 72. The sixth Commandment a prohibition of self-murder, i. 73. An offence against the sixth Commandment, though the killing be voluntary on the part of the person killed, i. 74. If lawful by this Commandment, we may kill our neighbour also, i. 74. One uniform argument against it from the whole tenour of the Gospel, i. 75. If lawful in an Heathen, it might not be so in a Christian; but if unlawful in an Heathen, much more so in a Christian, i. 79. Passages of scripture quoted of more force to forbid it, than those which Donne has produced to allow it, i. 87. Scripture-examples of, i. 88. When committed in consequence of guilt, more sinful than when preceded by a life of innocence, i. 94. Not committed by the Apostles or first Saints under their severest trials, i. 97. In some cases thought meritorious in the early ages of the church, but on fallacious grounds, i. 98. Why we may hazard our lives on laudable motives, though not put an end to them with our own hands, i. 101. Vague notions of a future state prevented the Heathens from reasoning closely on this subject, i. 105. Proportionably condemned by the most rational philosophers, i. 105. Religious suicide among Asiatic nations, i. 105. and 134. Burning of wives on their husbands' funeral pile, approved by the Brahmans, i. 112. Frequent among the Gentoos, i. 134. Among the Siamese, i. 137. Among the Japanese, i. 138. Among all the Scythian tribes, i. 141. In old age, or under bodily infirmities, countenanced among warlike nations, i. 142. In Scandinavia, among worshippers of Odin, i. 144. Difference between Asiatic and European suicide, i. 150. Condemned by Pythagoras, i. 151. Condemned by Socrates, i. 152. Plato's opinion of it, i. 157. Opinions of New Platonists concerning it, i. 161. Condemned by Plotinus, i. 163.

Con-

Condemned by Porphyry, i. 164. Condemned by Macrobius, i. 165. Favoured by Olympiodorus, i. 166. Censured by Aristotle, i. 167. Epicurus's doctrines lead to suicide, i. 170. A favourite doctrine of the Stoics, i. 174. Yet the practice contradictory to their notion of externals, i. 175. Cato's doctrine of suicide, i. 176. Seneca's opinion in its favour, i. 181. In some instances Seneca yielded practically to domestic arguments against it, i. 184. Seneca's arguments in favour of suicide amount to nothing, i. 191. Epictetus's opinion of suicide, i. 193. Epictetus approved of it in very few cases, and why, i. 198. M. Aurelius Antoninus, last of the Stoics, says little in favour of it, i. 201. Summary of the Stoical doctrine on suicide, i. 204. Approved by Cicero in certain situations, i. 206. Sentiments of ancient poets and tragic writers on suicide, i. 209. Opinions and practices of some famous individuals of old respecting it, i. 218. Summary of the opinions of ancient philosophers concerning it, i. 231. Theban and Athenian laws against it, i. 235. Funeral rites denied to self-murderers, i. 235. Clean custom of asking leave of the magistrate to destroy oneself, i. 236. and ii. 106, n. Similar custom among the Massilians, i. 238. Quintilian and Libanius have many fictitious declamations before the senate for leave of self-destruction, i. 239. Demonassa of Cyprus made a law against suicide, i. 241. How punished at Miletus, i. 242. From its frequency at Rome called the Roman death, i. 245. Doubtful whether any ancient laws of Rome expressly forbid it, i. 245. How punished by Tarquinius Priscus, i. 246. Seldom committed in the early ages of the Roman state, but on grounds of private or public virtue, i. 247. Causes of its growth in Rome, i. 250. Its prevalence in both sexes under the first Roman Emperors, i. 257. The Roman laws did not punish suicide as a crime, but only considered how far it affected the state or treasury, i. 264. and ii. 22. Bæbius Gemellus gives a burial ground to sui-

VOL. II.

cides, i. 265, n. Summary of the account of Roman suicide, i. 267. Many of the most celebrated suicides of antiquity may be exculpated on heathen principles, i. 269. Three classes of ancient suicides, and examples in each, i. 270. Comparison between ancient and modern suicide, to the great discredit of the latter, i. 284. Its prevalence in the Roman empire and among the Gothic nations who subdued it, familiarised the idea of its practice to Christian converts, i. 287. Primitive Christians demanded of Arrius Antoninus their own deaths, i. 288. Furious passion for it among the Donatists, i. 290. Virgin-suicides, i. 293. Opinions of the Fathers on virgin-suicide, i. 294. Augustin's general sentiments of suicide, i. 295. and ii. 28. Determinations of councils and canons in reprobation of it, i. 299. and ii. 22. No determination of the church that suicide excludes salvation, i. 301. Exposure of the suicide's body, and his burial with infamy, obtains in most European states on religious accounts; to which has been added on civil ones, confiscation of property, i. 303. Old French law against, i. 304, n. Flemish laws against, i. 304, n. Its punishment by the civil law, i. 304, n. Its punishment at Dantzic, in Geneva, and Savoy, i. 304, n. Its punishment in England, i. 306. Ecclesiastical censures of suicide in England, in refusal of Christian burial, i. 307. Confiscation of property of suicides whence introduced into England, i. 310. Extracts from ancient and modern lawyers concerning its punishment in England, i. 310. General grounds of the mode of its punishment in England, i. 317. Legal process against it in England, i. 317. Its penalties in England, refusal of Christian burial, and confiscation of property, i. 319. The suicide deemed a fool by a Manks jury, i. 319, n. Two considerations lead to evade the laws against it, i. 323. Madness thought necessarily to accompany it, i. 324. If all self-murderers "necessarily" lunatics, no grounds for the use of the term *felo-de-se*, i. 324. Does not necessarily im-

ply either absolute or partial madness, i. 326. Cool and deliberate, cannot imply a sudden lunacy, i. 327. Precipitate, does not imply a sudden lunacy, i. 328. "Moral" madness in all suicide, but this totally different from a "natural" madness, i. 331. "When is there insanity sufficient to excuse suicide?" considered, i. 332. Melancholic suicide, i. 332. A general rule proposed for judging of all cases of suicide, i. 334. Humane considerations for the family of the suicide incline to set aside the laws, i. 336. Lenient verdicts not founded in truth tend to countenance it, i. 337. Confiscation of property a cause of the general evasion of the laws against it, i. 338. Considerations on a revision of the laws against it, i. 339. Prevails in most countries in proportion to the progress of infidelity and free-thinking, i. 341. Account of suicide in France, i. 342. Practice of it in Geneva, i. 347. Melancholy a frequent cause of it in Geneva and England, i. 350. Number of suicides in England, i. 350. Number of suicides in London, i. 351. Number of suicides in Kent, i. 352. Number of suicides in England and Geneva compared, i. 359. Physical causes of suicide in England, i. 361. Causes of it in England from the peculiar character of the people, i. 371. Various whimsical and professional modes of suicide, i. 381. Satire on it, i. 382, n. and 388. n. The abomination of self-murder seated in infidelity and licentiousness, i. 385. Its supposed irremissibility, ii. 11. A sin against both reason and the senses, ii. 12. Difference between the desire of Christian martyrdom and the principle of Heathen suicide, ii. 16. Its being permitted by the laws of ancient nations, does not prove it no unnatural offence, ii. 19. Compared by Donne to Hellebore, ii. 41. The suicide not thankful to Providence; against Hume, ii. 55. Why a condemned person may not kill himself, ii. 64. "May I not murder myself rather than run the hazard of murdering another in the violence of my passion?" answered, ii. 163. Composure in its execution no proof of its in-

nocence, ii. 179. Its secrecy a proof that it wants justification to others, ii. 181. Ancient suicides avowed their purpose, ii. 181. Recapitulation of all arguments against it, ii. 185. A place in London formerly assigned for the burial of suicides, ii. 395. The legislature can only punish it by declaring its abhorrence of the crime, ii. 198. Ironical strictures on it not likely to have much effect, ii. 199. Precautions or preservatives against it, ii. 199. Argument against it from physiology, ii. 393. Expressions in this work which may seem to contain a partial approbation of suicide, qualified, ii. 393. Allegory on the birth of, ii. 399.

Suicides intended, Arria, wife of Thrasea Pætus, i. 258. Beza, ii. 7. and 8, n. M. de Boissy and his wife, ii. 167. Wife of Ceteus, i. 113. Cicero, i. 208. Hackman, ii. 154. At Madras, ii. 169. Relation of one in the Thames, in consequence of gaming, ii. 362, n.

Suicides, remarkable. Ahitophel, i. 91. Ajax, i. 210. Antony, i. 274. Apollonia, ii. 38. Arenswald, ii. 169. Arria, wife of Cæcina Pætus, i. 258. Wife of Afrubal, i. 270. Atticus, i. 259. Axithea, wife of Nicocles, i. 271. Boadicea, i. 275. M. Brutus, i. 219, n. Eustace Bugdel, ii. 112. Calanus, i. 109. Cassius, i. 219, n. Cato, i. 178. Wife of Ceteus, i. 113. Charondas, i. 281. Jer. Clarke, i. 380, n. Cleanthes, i. 174. Cleombrotus, i. 162, n. Cleomenes, K. of Sparta, i. 277. Cleopatra, ii. 275. Curtius, i. 247. Codrus, i. 282. Coma, i. 264, n. Corellius-Rufus, i. 222. Decii, i. 247. Demosthenes, i. 272. Dido, i. 114, n. Dioxippus, i. 278. Donatists, i. 290. Eleazar, i. 95. Empedocles, i. 278. A French gentleman, i. 347, n. A young gentleman at Geneva, i. 349, n. Bishop of Grenoble, i. 346, n. Hannibal, i. 272. Imilco, i. 279, and ii. 394. Indian prince, related by Montagne, ii. 81. Indian slave, ii. 81, n. Iphicrates, i. 272. Judas Iscariot, i. 92. Korean nobleman, i. 140, n. Lucan, i. 260. Lucretia, i. 247. Lycurgus, i. 281. Macedonian

I N D E X.

donian virgins, i. 277. Macer Licinius, i. 263, n. Marcellinus, i. 189, n. and i. 258. Milesian virgins, i. 242. Mithridates, i. 273. Col. Philip Mordaunt, i. 372, n. Cocceius Nerva, i. 261. Nicocles, i. 271. Otho, i. 283. Cæcina Pætus, i. 258, n. Thrafea Pætus, i. 258, n. Panthea, i. 114, n. Pelagia, i. 293. Petronius, i. 259. Pontius Pilate, ii. 393. Ptolemy, i. 271, n. Razis, i. 95. Wife of Rhaam Chund, i. 114. Robeck, ii. 74. Samson, i. 88. Sardanapalus, i. 273. Saul, i. 90. Seneca, i. 192, n. Troops of Sertorius, i. 280. Silius Italicus, i. 223, n. Richard Smith and his wife, ii. 165. Sophonisba, i. 275. Titus Jubellius Taurea, i. 278. Themistocles, i. 282. Theoxena with her husband, i. 277. Lucius Vetus with his mother-in-law and daughter, i. 261. Xanthians, i. 275. Zeno, i. 174, n.

Suicism, i. 2, n.

Sully prevails on Henry IV. of France to issue edicts against duelling, ii. 231.

Sumatra, gaming in, and laws against it, ii. 295.

Superstition, the term ill applied by Hume, ii. 46. His curious assortment of superstitions, ii. 58.

Sybarites, their effeminacy, i. 12, n.

Sydenham, Dr. made the most particular observations on nervous diseases, i. 369, n.

T.

Tarquinius Priscus, his punishment of suicide, i. 246.

Tartars, Kalmuck, expose their sick and lame, i. 136, n.

Taylor, Bp. his reflections on the future state of suicides, i. 301, n.

Taurea, Titus Jubellius, his indignant spirit, i. 278.

Tea, its bad effects on the spirits, i. 365.

Temperance, its use in the prevention of suicide, ii. 211.

Theatrical exhibitions, caution to females against private ones, ii. 367.

Thebes, law of, against suicide, i. 235.

Themistocles poisoned himself, for his country's good, i. 282.

Theodore, Abp. of Canterbury, a passage in his Penitential against suicide, i. 307.

Theodoric, the Gothic king in Italy, his gaming, ii. 308.

Theoxena, her spirit and resolution, i. 277.

Tilts and Tournaments, ii. 225.

Tonquin, gaming in, ii. 296.

Tournaments, ii. 225. Catastrophe of Hen. II. of France at one, ii. 226.

Tradesmen, mischiefs of their affecting to live like gentlemen, ii. 353. Preventives of their excessive gaming proposed, ii. 386.

Tragedies, English, too replete with self-murder, ii. 116.

Tragedy, observations on its moral effects, ii. 116, n.

Tree, holy, Siamese hang themselves on, out of devotion, i. 137.

Trent, council of, severely censures all duels, ii. 229.

Trifling agreeably, the taste of modern companies, ii. 290.

Turf, its ancient and modern honours compared, ii. 320. Its fame highly coveted, ii. 346. Losses on it attempted to be repaired at the gaming-table, ii. 350.

Turks, fight no duels, ii. 243. but substitute assassination, ii. 243, n. Observe the prohibition of Mahomet better than the Persians; and confine themselves to drafts and chess, and play not for money, ii. 303.

V.

Vetus, Lucius, his voluntary death, together with his mother-in-law and daughter, i. 261.

Vice, writings in favour of, eagerly read, i. 13.

Virgil, a passage from his *Æneis* relative to suicide, i. 211. Not partial to suicide, i. 217.

Virgin-suicides require a share of compassion, though indefensible on christian principles, i. 100. Some account of them, i. 293.

Virgins of Milatus, their rage for suicide, i. 242.

I N D E X.

Virgins of Macedon, their high sense of chastity, i. 277.

Virtues, moral, Donne's objections to reasons against suicide on their grounds, answered, ii. 33.

Voltaire, his reflections on suicide, ii. 106.

Von Arenswald, Capt. account of, ii. 169. Extracts from his letters, ii. 173. Remarks on his conduct and principles, ii. 178.

Ufurer, his villainy compared with that of the sharper, ii. 342.

W.

Warburton, Bp. his explanation of a passage in Virgil relative to suicide, considered, i. 212. Allows the impiety of suicide to be an exoteric doctrine of the ancient philosophers, but doubts its being an esoteric, i. 154, n.

Wealth, distinctions between men of commerce and gentlemen by birth much confounded by its influx, ii. 352.

Weather, its influence on the spirits of the English, i. 362.

"*Werter, Sorrows of*," pernicious tendency of that publication, ii. 122. The story of Werter, ii. 123, n. Extracts from, ii. 131.

Wheatley, his observations on the rubric in the Book of Common Prayer refusing christian burial to suicides, i. 309, n.

Will of a duellist, ii. 275, n.

William the Conqueror said to have introduced the game of chess into England, ii. 327.

Wives of the Gentoos burn themselves on their husbands' funeral pile, i. 112. Instances of the same practice in many other countries, i. 124, n.

Women appeared in great numbers at the ancient tournaments, ii. 226, n. In what shape their influence might be material in discountenancing the duel, ii. 281, n. Truth's address to them on their affectation of masculine pursuits and love of gambling, ii. 366. Inconveniencies and ruin to which they are exposed by an excessive love of play, ii. 368. Preventives of excessive gaming proposed to them, ii. 386.

"*World*," humorous proposal in that work for a receptacle of suicides, i. 382, n.

Worth, personal, too little attended to, i. 10.

X.

Xanthus, the resolution of its inhabitants to die, i. 275.

Y.

Young, Dr. copiously describes the absurdity of the idea of annihilation, i. 65, n.

Z.

Zeno, contributed not a little to the encouragement of suicide by his own voluntary death, i. 174. Cause of his suicide, i. 174, n.

Zenobia, her resignation, i. 275, n.

C O R R E C T I O N S.

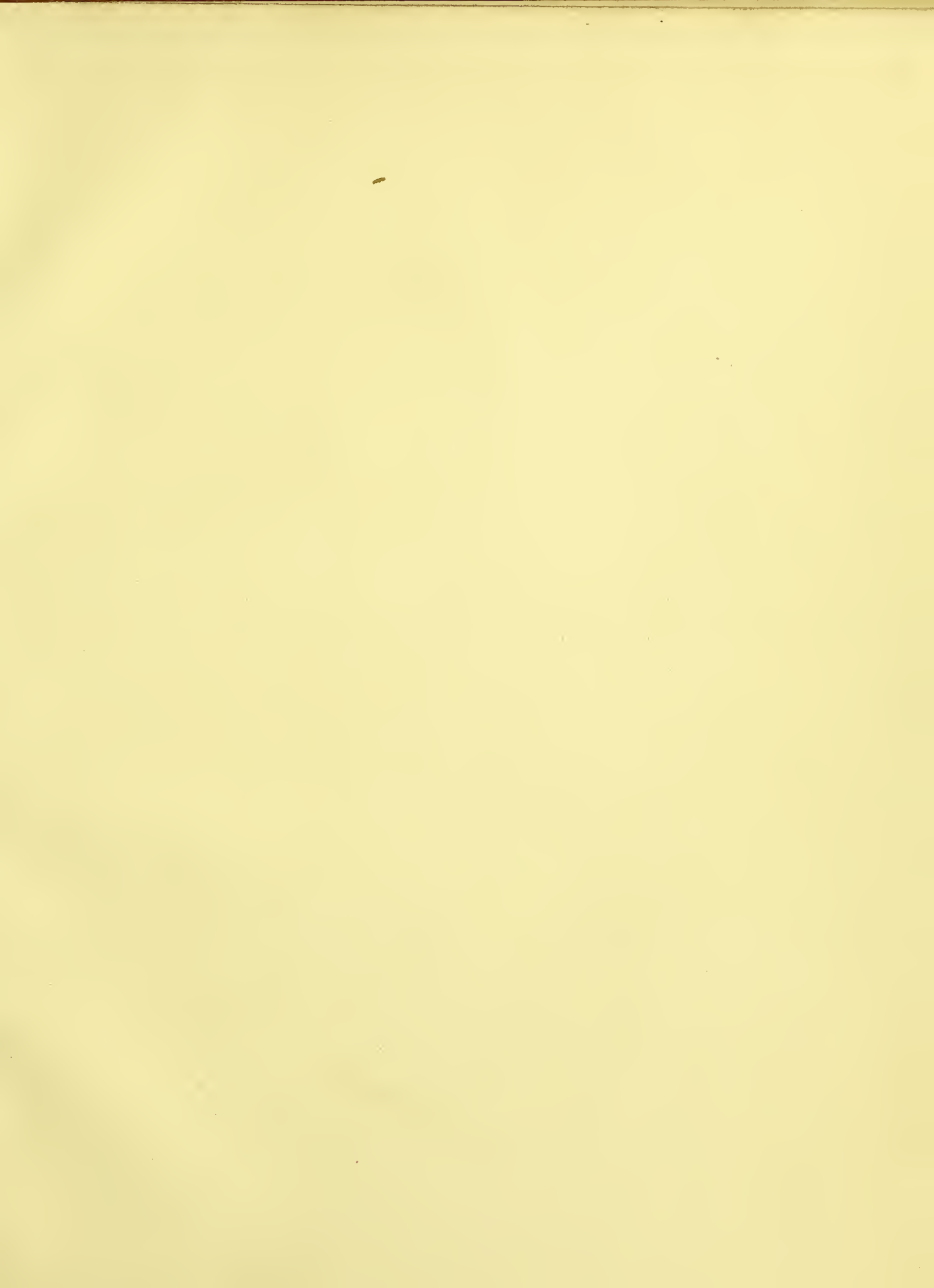
In VOL. I.

Page Line

- 6—15 for "its" read "it."
276—21 for "There" read "I here."

In VOL. II.

- 7—21 for "by" read "be."
9—27 for "illi" read "ille:" and for "intolerabilis" read "intolerabiles."
12—3 add comma after "austerity."
—30 add comma after "it."
15—24 for "thifty" read "thrifty."
20—12 for "6" read "7."
22—12 add ")" after "itself."
38—25 for "hemself" read "herself."
68—3 omit comma after "foundations."
70—9 add comma after "infidelity."
72—17 for "villany" read "villainy."
86—17 for "greater" read "great."
—33 for "beause" read "because."
87—2 for "unrivalled" read "unrivald."
88—10 place inverted commas at the head of every line from line 10, page 88, to line 11 in page 98:—and from line 14 in page 98, to line 25 in page 105.
90—4 for "was" read "were."
99—27 also for "was" read "were."
111—18 add ")" after "says."
129—29 add comma after "confusion."
—32 add comma after "sense."
143—30 omit the second "all."
145—30 add comma after "errors."
147—28 for "once" read "one."
148—26 add comma after "correspondence."
155—21 for "1778" read "1779."
175—25 for "I think" read "Think."
181—24 for "secrecy" read "secrefy."
187—20 for "atchievement" read "achievement;" and the same in p. 226,-3;—262,-2;—
and 326,-1.
195—25 add "against" after "offending."
208—7 add comma after "good."
219—17 for "gravia" read "gravium."
221—20 for "favourable" read "favourite."
228—14 for "Cromwell" read "Cromwel;" and the same in two other places in p. 246.
234—7 add "not" before "to baffle."
240—13 for "superior" read "more."
254—16 for "award" read "ward."
285—18 for "whom" read "which."
312—39 for "off" read "of."
321—18 for "Juv. II." read "Juv. XI."
374—7 for "indigent" read "indignant."
387—30 for "memorium" read "memoriam."
391—3 for "but" read—"But."
—32 for "δ βίβλος," read "ἡ βίβλος."
399—29 for "bankruptcy" read "bankrupcy."



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